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HANSARD'S DEBATES.

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HANSARD'S
PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES:

FORMING A CONTINUATION OF
"THE PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY OF ENGLAND,
FROM THE EARLIEST PERIOD TO THE
YEAR 1803."

Third Series;

COMMENCING WITH THE ACCESSION OF
WILLIAM IV.

VOL. XVII.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM
THE SECOND DAY OF APRIL,
TO
THE TWENTIETH DAY OF MAY, 1833.

Third Volume of the Session.

LONDON:
Printed by T. C. HANSARD, *Pater-noster-Row*,
FOR BALDWIN AND CRADOCK; J. BOOKER; LONGMAN, REES, ORME, AND CO.;
J. M. RICHARDSON; PARBURY, ALLEN, AND CO.; J. HATCHARD AND SON;
J. RIDGWAY; E. JEFFERY AND SON; J. RODWELL; CALKIN AND BUDD;
R. H. EVANS; J. BOOTH; AND T. C. HANSARD.

1833.

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THIRD SERIES.

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HANSARD'S

HANSARD'S
Parliamentary Debates

During the First Session *of the* Eleventh Parliament
of the United Kingdom of Great Britain *and*
Ireland, *appointed to meet at Westminster,*
29th January, 1833,
in the Third Year of the Reign of His Majesty
WILLIAM THE FOURTH.

Third Volume of the Session.

HOUSE OF LORDS,
Tuesday, April 2, 1833.

Minutes.] Bill. The Royal Assent was given by Commission to the Suppression of Disturbances (Ireland) Bill.

Petitions presented. By Lord Suffield, from Clitheroe, against Sunday Trading.—By Lord King, from six Places in Ireland, against Tithes and Church Cess; from a Congregation at Wem, for Relief, for Protestant Dissenters; from certain Christians called Separatists, for substituting in all Cases a Solemn Affirmation for an Oath; from the Political Union of Yeovil, for the Abolition of Restrictions on the Press; and from Paisley, for Poor Laws for Ireland.—By Lords Auckland, Suffield, and King, by Earl Fitzwilliam, the Marquess of Stafford, and the Duke of Richmond, from a Number of Places, —against Slavery.—By the Earls of Cawdor, and Rosebery, from Places in Scotland, against the present System of Church Patronage in that Country.—By the Bishops of Hereford, Durham, Bangor, and Rochester, the Earl of Roden, and Lord Redesdale, from a Number of Places,—for a Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By the Earl of Roden, from several Places in Ireland, against the Ministerial System of Education, and against the proposed Measure of Church Reform.

CHURCH PATRONAGE (WALES.)] Lord *King* expressed the great regret which he felt, that when the petition respecting the abuses in the Welch Church was presented last night, a right reverend prelate (the Bishop of St. Asaph) had not been present, for on a former evening the right reverend Prelate had used expressions which had done great wrong and injury to the author of a book which he had quoted, and which he had denounced as containing a number of gross falsehoods. The right reverend Prelate had adduced two instances, and had told the House to judge of the book by that sample. Now, one of the instances to which the right reverend Prelate had referred was this—that it was stated in the book, that Christ Church Oxford derived 4,000*l.* from the tithes of certain parishes in Wales, whereas, in point of fact, it only derived 2,500*l.* Now, on referring to the book, he found it stated in no less than four different places, at page 125, at page 132, and in two other passages, that the sum received by Christ Church Oxford, was only 2,500*l.* After the right reverend Prelate had made that statement to their Lordships, there appeared a contradiction of it in some of the papers. It was not, under such circumstances, too much to expect that the right reverend Prelate would have come down to their Lordships and owned that he made an unfounded statement, especially as he made his own erroneous assertion the basis of the strong comment *Ex uno disce omnes.* The right reverend Prelate mentioned another case relating to the parish of Llandudno, which proved, that he had quoted from the same edition of Mr. Johnes's book which he then held in his hand, and to which he had already referred. When a person of the right reverend Prelate's elevated situation came forward to destroy the reputation of an author, he should confine himself strictly to repeating the exact words which that author used. He addressed the right reverend Prelate on that occasion to give him an opportunity of correcting the error into which the right reverend Prelate had fallen.

The Bishop of *St. Asaph* regretted extremely that he had been prevented by indisposition from attending in his place yesterday evening; but he must add, that if the noble Marquess had had the courtesy to inform him that he was going to present a petition connected with so humble an individual as himself, he would, notwithstanding his indisposition, have made a point of attending in his place in that House. He thanked the noble baron for having given him an opportunity upon this occasion of answering, not only what he (Lord King) had just said, but also the assertion that he had on a former night made an unfounded statement. He had not quoted at all from the pamphlet to which the noble Baron had referred—he had read from a paper (which he believed to be good authority, as it came from a highly respectable clergyman in his dioces) a statement to this effect—that there had appeared in a certain pamphlet, in one passage, that Christ Church Oxford received 4,700*l.* a-year, and in another that it received 4,500*l.* a-year for tithes from various parishes in Wales. Now, it appeared that the fact was, that the whole value of the tithes of the parishes in question was only 2,000*l.* a-year, and that of this sum only 500*l.* a-year was paid to Christ Church, Oxford. And, such being the case, was not the author guilty of a misrepresentation? In the parish of Llandudno the author had said, that the tithes were 250*l.*, and that the curate received only 68*l.* a-year. Now, it was true, that the author never said that Archdeacon Jones, to whom the living belonged, received all the tithes, but he had left that fact to be supposed by all his readers. The petition which was presented yesterday came from the same quarter as those which had been presented on a former occasion. Mr. Johnes was in London, as many of their Lordships were already aware: for he had written to the editor of a newspaper a letter contradicting the statements which he (the Bishop of St. Asaph) had made in that House, and had requested the editor to publish that letter along with his report of the proceedings in that House. That was a gross breach of privilege, but certainly not worth the notice of their Lordships. He understood that Mr. Johnes had lost considerably by the publication of his pamphlet, and that he was now presenting petitions in order to get a sale for it in that manner. He would not say, that that pamphlet abounded with falsehoods, but he would say, that it abounded with gross misrepresentations. He was sorry to hear the noble Marquess, on a former occasion, cast a sneer upon a most respectable clergyman in his diocess, the reverend Mr. Cleaver. A better man did not exist, and he only wished the noble Marquess to imitate the conduct and follow the example of that clergyman, who gave away among the poor three parts of the income which he derived from his living. Regarding this gentleman and his brother, Mr. Johnes had been guilty of many misrepresentations. Mr. Johnes had also given a list of all the places from which he (the Bishop of St. Asaph) derived his income. The description was so minute that a stranger must suppose it true, for he summed up all the items by saying, "Total amount of the revenues of the Bishop, 9,267*l.* a-year." So minute were the items, that any person reading them must suppose that Mr. Johnes had had access to the books of his receiver. He could only say, that he wished very much that his income was such as Mr. Johnes had described it to be. Their Lordships would see, that Mr. Johnes's statement was a gross misrepresentation when they had before them the report of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. Mr. Johnes had published another letter in the papers of that morning, in which he said "I will not believe that the right reverend Prelate would charge me with wilful falsehood on light grounds." He asked their Lordships whether they were to be called to account in consequence of paragraphs in newspapers. He could not retract what he had on a former evening said; on the contrary, he felt it to be his duty to persist in asserting that the book written by Mr. Johnes contained very gross misrepresentations, and statements that were untrue.

The Marquess of *Westminster* said, that after the very pointed manner in which he had been alluded to, it was impossible for him to refrain from troubling their Lordships with a few observations. He regretted that the right reverend Prelate should have made the remarks which he had done, for as he (the Marquess of Westminster) had observed upon a former evening, they were made upon a person who had not the advantage of being entitled to answer them. The right reverend Prelate now accused Mr. Johnes of not having stated some matters correctly with regard to the trustees of a certain property. It was possible that Mr. Johnes might not be correct as to the exact manner in which the revenues in question were distributed, but there seemed little doubt, that he was correct as to the revenues themselves. It was somewhat hard on the gentleman to be thus attacked when the substance of his statement appeared to be well founded. The right reverend Prelate had made serious charges against this gentleman on a former occasion, and he now tried to bolster them up by bringing forward fresh charges. The right reverend Prelate said, that he had evidence that Mr. Johnes's statements were untrue, and he referred to a letter which he said was written by a most respectable gentleman to prove them to be so. That brought the matter round to the question, which he had before urged to the House, namely, that they should probe the subject to the bottom, and for that reason he should be glad to call the persons who could give them information to the bar of the House. The petition which the right reverend Prelate before referred to, as presented in the other House of Parliament, did not mention him, but the right reverend Prelate had chosen to take it to himself, and to direct his remarks to it, and to attack the person who had presented it. The statement which had subsequently been published in a morning paper, seemed to him to be a triumphant answer to the right reverend Prelate; but then the right reverend Prelate said, that the publication of that statement was a breach of their Lordships' privileges. If it was so, the printer might, by the rules of the House, be called to the Bar, and he should, in one respect, be glad to see that done—namely, if it would afford an opportunity of proving the truth of the statement. As to the matter of privilege, however, the Orders of the House were daily more infringed by the attendance of persons to take notes of what passed, and to publish them, and still more again by the remarks made on the speeches delivered there; but the custom of calling people to the Bar for these things was now pretty well discontinued, and he must say that it seemed to him a custom "more honoured in the breach than the observance."

JURIES (IRELAND).] Lord Plunkett moved the second reading of the Juries (Ireland) Bill.

Lord *Carbery* could not let this Bill pass without making some observations upon it, and declaring that he was strongly opposed to the measure. It professed to be a bill for the consolidation of the law for the summoning of Juries in Ireland. A more important subject could not detain their Lordships' attention. In his opinion it had been hastily introduced, and without any sufficient necessity. It ought to be founded upon the opinion of the Judges, and the defects of the present system ought to be distinctly pointed out before there was any attempt made to change it. In his opinion the whole intended effect of the Bill was to be found in the first clause, by which men who held a freehold of 10*l.* a-year value or were leaseholders to the amount of 15*l.*, were to be put upon the Jury list. Why many of these persons could not read the issue they would have to try, and many of them were even ignorant of the English language, yet their names were to be put into the book, and the Judges would have no power of objecting to them. If this Bill were to pass into a law, he was convinced that there would be an end of justice, and of the security of the subject. The law would be liable to be abused by a bad or a corrupt Sheriff. He was confident that if the question were put to the Judges of Ireland, whether it was necessary that any change should be made in the law relating to the selection of Jurors, the majority of them would be against the change, and so would the majority of the eminent men at the bar. Instead of an improvement, he was confident that a more dangerous mode of obtaining Jurors had never been introduced. He opposed this Bill, because he was interested in the welfare of Ireland, which he was sure would be injuriously affected by it.

The Earl of *Wicklow* thought it would be better to continue the present system than to adopt that which was now proposed. It was a curious fact, but it was perfectly true, that among the institutions of Ireland, that which stood pre-eminently forward for its good working was the Jury system. It was said, that the Jury system of the two countries should be assimilated. Noble Lords opposite would better exercise their talents and patriotism if they were to attempt to assimilate the habits of the people and the condition of the two countries, than their system of Jury Laws. If they could do that, then they might come with some degree of plausibility to Parliament, and ask for a law to assimilate the Jury systems of the two countries. If there was one evil more than another from which Ireland had suffered, it was from the too great earnestness to introduce laws adapted to a rich and civilized country, and to its refinements, into a country not thus happily circumstanced. It was said, as another reason for introducing this Bill, that the present system did not work well. That was a most manifest error. Let them consult the twelve Judges on that point. The noble and learned Lord opposite had done him the favour to show him a letter from them on this subject. That letter was supposed to express their opinion in favour of the proposed alteration. It did, in fact, say no such thing. Its meaning was mistaken. He would undertake to state, that so far from saying, that the present system did not work well, they were of a contrary opinion. They desired no change, but merely said, that if this Bill was to pass, certain alterations which they mentioned ought to be made, but they thought it not desirable to alter the law. Did then this recommendation of change come from the public Commissioners in Ireland? No, it did not; for those Commissioners, in their report, say that, having inquired of the Sheriffs and Sub-Sheriffs as to the efficacy of the present Jury laws, their answer had been a recommendation of them as they now stood, and a denial of the existence of any possible reason why they should not work well. From whence, then, did this Bill come? He would tell them. It came from a learned King's Counsel, who was high in the confidence of his Majesty's Government, and to whose suggestions they were ever ready to listen. It came from a learned person in a silk gown, who had continually merited all the high encomiums which had been pronounced upon him. The Bill was of his recommendation, and it must be considered by their Lordships as a new ingredient in the dish of sops for Cerberus which his Majesty's Government were in the habit of administering to that learned Gentleman. Their Lordships had not a choice whether they could reject this Bill—such an alternative was not left them—because the Government was pledged—most unadvisedly, as he thought—to this measure. It was, therefore, impossible that they should reject it. Still he acknowledged, that when compared with the last Bill on that subject which had been before their Lordships, it was decidedly of an improved character, though those improvements were not so great as their Lordships were led to believe they would have been. He willingly admitted, that it was devoid of many of the objections which were observable in the other Bill—that in regard to Special Juries, it adopted the suggestions of the Judges—but its main faults still remained. The Jury-book must be filled with names from a class he could not approve. Such a host of persons were admitted—such a crowd of individuals as would disgrace any Court of Justice, and he sincerely hoped that this would be corrected in the Committee. Their Lordships must all know, that it was a total deviation from the Constitution, to make a money qualification the sole qualification for these important duties. The old Acts of Parliament on this subject, particularly of the reign of Edward 3rd, stated that "character and intelligence" were leading qualifications for a Juror—that "the most efficient and least suspected" individuals were the proper persons to be chosen. The Sheriff's oath, too, bore strongly upon this point; and without its repeal he did not see how they could pass this Bill. That oath distinctly required him not to look to one qualification alone, but to all qualifications—to see that every person called as a Juror was of sufficient standing in life and of sufficient character. This, however, he should endeavour to amend in Committee. One part, connected with which there would be the greatest difficulty, which he considered would be wholly inoperative, was that which devolved such heavy and responsible duties on Magistrates. It required them to hold a Special Sessions, to take and register the names from the various barony collectors. Now, he had long acted as a Magistrate, and he well knew the difficulty of the duty which those functionaries had to perform—he well knew the labours they had to go through at Assizes, Sessions, and Petty Sessions. He well knew how difficult it would be to get them together; and if got together, that it would be impossible that the book could be formed. These were the grounds on which he could not give his concurrence to this Bill, and which would induce him, in the Committee, to move such amendments as he thought calculated to remedy the evils which he found in it.

Lord *Wynford* said, their Lordships had done wrong—they had indeed been guilty of inflicting a grievous injury on the people of Ireland, by voting for the Coercive Bill, if there was any pretence whatever for the introduction and passing of the present measure. Why had they been called upon to agree to that Bill—why had they consented to adopt it? Because they were led to believe that Juries in Ireland were too subject to the influence of popular opinion, and too subservient to popular feeling. And yet they were now asked to pass this Bill which gave to popular feeling a greater sway, and a stronger power than it had ever before been allowed to assume. He should endeavour to prevent his noble friend who spoke last, from proposing any Amendments in the Committee, for he looked upon the principle of the Bill as so bad, that he should move the House to reject it altogether. Were it once put into operation, it would soon be shown, that the lives of many honest men were no longer safe. It was asserted to be a good and sound principle to assimilate the law of Ireland with that of this country; but he must contend with his noble friend, that before they could wisely, and therefore safely do that, they must assimilate the people. The system which was so admirable in England—so easy in its working, and so beneficial in its effects, would, he was satisfied, if applied to Ireland, prove the greatest curse that could be sent into that country; for it would not only not afford honest men protection against danger, but it would actually put honest men in danger of their lives and property. But he greatly blamed the Government in this matter. There was no consistency in their proceedings in thus bringing forward a Coercive Bill to correct and control popular feeling, and a Jury Bill to give it energy and force. Surely they might have stated some good that was to be wrought by this Bill—some mischief which required a departure from the principle of the Established Jury Laws in Ireland. Why was the duty which had hitherto devolved upon the Sheriff taken from him by this enactment? Could any man state that? What had been the faults of the Sheriffs—where were their errors? They were called upon to pass an imputation on every Gentleman in Ireland from whom Sheriffs were taken, because there was a movement of some kind or other in Dublin. Their Lordships ought to maintain some proportion between the proposed enactment and its object. Now, as to Special Juries, he admitted that the present Bill was, in some respects, an improvement on the English Special Jury system; for a qualification was inserted after the name of merchants to the effect that they should not be merchants by retail. In his own experience, under the English Jury system, he had seen two Baronets, a higgler, and a gentleman's servant, on the same Special Jury. A complaint was made to him (Lord Wynford) by the two Baronets; but he told them he could do nothing, for that he could not turn those men out of the Special Juror's box whom the law had placed in it. Nevertheless the Bill itself was sufficient evidence that there was not a sufficient class in Ireland from which to form the Special Juries as there provided. It might, therefore, happen, that though a person ought to be tried by a Special Jury, he might, nevertheless, be in fact tried by a Common Jury. The object of the Bill was to assimilate the Irish to the English system of Trial by Jury. Now, although he highly applauded the alterations in the Criminal Law, which had some years ago been introduced by a right hon. Baronet, and was satisfied, that if full effect had been given to those alterations, crime would, in a great degree, have been put down, and the continuance of capital punishments rendered less necessary, he could not bestow the same commendation on the right hon. Baronet's Jury Bill. The effect of that Bill had certainly been to lower the character of Special Juries in this country. Nevertheless, it might have made Common Juries more like Special Juries, but it also made Special Juries something worse than Common Juries. He was old enough to remember when a Special Jury at Guildhall consisted of persons who were generally so well informed as to be able to teach the Judges on questions of commercial law; but it now happened that, by the accident of the ballot, persons were put on Special Juries at the Guildhall, and called upon to try commercial questions, who knew no more of commercial law than the crier of the court. He was informed, however, by those better acquainted with Ireland than he was, that the persons qualified under the present Bill would not be sufficient to furnish the number required for Special Juries in Ireland; and that it would probably often happen in practice that, when a party in an action tried to get a Special Jury, and underwent all the expenses, he would have a good chance of having his cause tried by a Common Jury. Understanding that the Bill was in opposition to the practical experience of the Irish Judges, and foreseeing that very serious consequences would follow if such a measure became law in the present state of the country, he should move, by way of Amendment, that the Bill should be read a second time this day six months.

The Marquess of *Clanricarde* was surprised at the objections urged by the learned Lord to the principle of the Bill, that it was neither more nor less than a step towards assimilating the legal institutions of England and Ireland. Did the learned Lord see the full force of this objection, that if it was good for anything as an argument, it would be an argument for a Repeal of the Union? What was the ground on which Mr. Pitt proposed and carried the Union? Was it not that it was the best means of assimilating the institutions of the two countries? But, then, said the learned Lord, the English Jury system would lead to abuses in Ireland; it was too democratic in principle for the present condition of that country. Why, if this were admitted as an objection, then Trial by Jury should not have been introduced into Ireland, for it had led to abuses. Why, in fairness, argue from the abuse against the use? If the system had worked well in England, why not extend its advantages to Ireland. But, said the learned Lord, you should first assimilate the condition and moral habits of the two nations. Why, that was the very object contemplated by the Bill. What its supporters wanted was, to induce that confidence in, and respect for, the laws in Ireland, which had so long been the blessing of this country. In Ireland the people in general had no confidence in the law; they, in fact, knew those who administered it but as so many legalized tyrants. The law to them was but a machinery of oppression, instead of protection; hence their approving sympathies were readily extended to its violators or its victims; who, instead of, as in this happier country, being regarded with condemnation and abhorrence, were actually sacred in the eyes of their fellow-villagers. Having, then, no confidence in the ordinary tribunals, and thence no respect for their ordinances, they redressed their own wrongs as they could; and thus revenge—which, according to Bacon, was but a kind of "wild justice"—became invested, in the eyes of the lawless ignorant Irish marauders, with the very attribute, and garb of a virtue. It was absurd to attribute the deplorable working of this mischievous delusion to the "sayings and doings" of Mr. O'Connell and his followers. The grievance lay deeper; it had its source in centuries of misgovernment and oppression; it could only be remedied by inspiring the people with a confidence in the laws and institutions to which they owed allegiance. All that the agitators did was to take artful advantage of the unsettled state of the public mind in Ireland, and to stimulate it for their own sordid purpose. But let them convince the people of Ireland that the misgovernment and oppression which had so long laid waste their country was at an end; let every poor Irishman, at present uncertain of the very means of existence, with famine and rapine staring him in the face, the only choice left him being to starve or to emigrate, let him feel that he had a stake in the country—that he was not to starve in the midst of plenty; let him be taught to have confidence in the law, and tranquillity would not be violated. Let him feel that the laws were meant for his protection, and not as a machinery to oppress him, and they might laugh to scorn all the arts of all the agitators that ever marred the peace and prosperity of any country. Were they surprised at the influence exercised by Mr. O'Connell and his men? The wonder was, that it was not greater, for surely no more fitting tools and ready dupes could be devised than an excitable people goaded on by physical want and political oppression. It was, therefore, because he conceived the present Bill was calculated to induce confidence in the jury tribunals in Ireland, and thence respect for the laws, that he would give it his best support. To say that it was democratic in principle was no objection, unless it was clearly shown that it would call into existence, as Jurors, persons whom the Irish would less confide in than the present class of Jurors, and that could not be shown, for the contrary was the fact.

Lord *Ellenborough* presumed that the view taken of the measure by the noble Baron who had just sat down was different from the view taken of it by the noble and learned Lord at the head of the law in Ireland. To him (Lord Ellenborough) it appeared strange, that having yesterday passed a Bill to take away Trial by Jury from the Irish on the ground of its inadequacy to its purpose, their Lordships were now called on to pass a Bill, which if the noble Baron's understanding of it was correct, was intended to introduce a very inferior class of persons into the Juries of Ireland. In a moral state of a country there could be no greater advantage than to extend the number of persons capable of serving upon Juries, but in a demoralized state it was highly dangerous, as it exposed them to be acted upon either by intimidation or by partiality, He was quite sure that the noble and learned Lord was anxious for the fair administration of justice, and that he would acquiesce in any Amendment that would improve the operation of the Bill, and more especially that would show the *animus* with which it was passed. For it appeared to him that there was not so much danger from the actual provisions of the Bill as from a misinterpretation of the motives of those provisions. What he dreaded was, the inference that would be drawn from the enactments, rather than the enactments themselves. If the Bill were passed in quiet times, it might be attended with no inconvenience, but being passed in very unquiet times, he feared its effects might be injurious. What was the ground-work of the Bill? Had any complaint been made of the recent practice with respect to the impanelling of Juries in Ireland? So far from that, the Juries there had conducted themselves in a manner to excite astonishment, and had given more courageous and better verdicts than could have been expected. And why? In consequence of the manner in which the Sheriffs had exercised their functions. The noble Lord referred to the evidence which was given before a Committee of the Lords on that subject, in order to prove the good composition of Juries in Ireland. It was rarely that he differed from his noble and learned friend behind him; but he doubted whether his noble and learned friend was right in supposing, that the Bill originated with Mr. O'Connell; because he held in his hand evidence given on oath by that hon. and learned Gentleman of a contrary tendency. The noble Lord read Mr. O'Connell's evidence, from which he deduced the inference, that even now the Sheriffs in Ireland were not enabled to select a sufficient number of proper persons for Special Juries. And yet, the object of the Bill was to bring inferior persons into Special Juries, instead of superior persons, which were required. He was quite aware, however, that his Majesty's Ministers were committed to the Bill; and he regretted it, because he could see no reason for the measure. But, at any rate, it was desirable that no false inference should be drawn from it. He thought, therefore, that it would be well to provide, that the Sheriff should have the power of adding to the book the names of any persons qualified, but omitted by the Magistrates. For the apprehension was—not that unqualified persons should be admitted—but that qualified persons should be omitted. If the Bill were so amended, that no false inference might be drawn from it, and that its *animus* might be shown, it might, perhaps, be productive of some advantage.

The Earl of *Roden* wished to state the ground upon which, in addition to those already stated by his noble friends near him, he opposed the Bill, which he considered a most dangerous measure. That ground was, that the present Judges of Ireland were unanimously opposed to the principle of the measure—namely, the Juror's Book. He deeply regretted, that the noble and learned Lord had brought it forward. There was no good reason why any change should be made in the present mode of striking Juries in Ireland. But as his noble and learned friend near him had observed, it was a sop given to Cerberus. It was for the purpose of redeeming an unfortunate pledge, although at a risk of the lives and property of his Majesty's loyal subjects in Ireland.

Lord *Plunkett*, in reference to the expression which the noble Lord who had just sat down had repeated, after the noble Lord opposite — namely, that the Bill was a sop to Cerberus, declared himself at a loss to know the meaning of the expression. If he were compelled to guess who was meant by Cerberus, he should say that he supposed Mr. O'Connell. Whether Mr. O'Connell would be a proper guardian for the place of which Cerberus was the keeper, it was for the noble Lords to say; but he (Lord Plunkett) had not introduced that learned Gentleman in any such character to their Lordships. Too much stress had been laid on the name and influence of that Gentleman, for he could assure their Lordships that he was not to be induced to bring in a Bill because Mr. O'Connell approved of it, or to be diverted from bringing in a bill because Mr. O'Connell disapproved of it. All that he asked himself was, if a measure was a fair and a proper one. But there never was a more wild and ridiculous supposition, than that the present Bill originated in any suggestion of Mr. O'Connell. It was founded on the measure which had been introduced by Sir Robert Peel, who certainly was not very likely to act in concert with Mr. O'Connell. If this were a Bill intended to conciliate Mr. O'Connell, he (Lord Plunkett) found himself in good company in proposing it, for it was not his Bill alone: it was likewise the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman who lately held the office of Chief Secretary of Ireland, and of the Solicitor-General of Ireland, as well as of Sir Robert Peel. It was not a measure founded on any new principles: it was founded on practical knowledge, for the greatest part of it had already been adopted in England. The noble Baron had taunted them with wishing to assimilate the laws of Ireland to those of England. Did the noble Lord mean to say that it was not right to do so? He (Lord Plunkett) did not mean to say, that a difference ought not to be made in the laws, according to the habits of the country for which they were intended. He allowed it, and acting upon that principle, had made such alterations as he thought necessary, in order to suit the laws in force on the subject in England to the state of Ireland. And would the noble Lord say, that it was improper thus to assimilate the laws of the two countries? For his part, he should consider that it would not only be absurd, but dangerous, to act on a contrary principle. He regretted that noble Lords, in discussing the measure, had not confined themselves to the consideration of the question before them, but had wandered from it in order to make unnecessary attacks on the Government. It had been said, that this was an improper time for the introduction of such a measure; that it was not at the very time when they had passed a Coercion Bill which might abolish trials by Jury in Ireland, they should bring in a Bill for the Regulation of Juries. He could not agree with the noble Lord who had made that assertion. He thought that there could not be a more appropriate time to introduce a measure for the improvement of the administration of justice in Ireland, than at the time when it was found necessary to employ harsh measures for the suppression of the disturbances. It would show the people of Ireland, that the Government, while they were ready to adopt effectual means for the suppression of those disturbances, were likewise ready to improve the administration of the law. It was by a gradual succession of such improvements that they could hope to put an end to that terrible statute, and relieve the people from its operation. The noble Lord had said, that the present measure would destroy the characters of Jurors. Was the noble Lord aware of the qualification which entitled a man to be a Juror as the law at present stood? What did their Lordships think was the qualification? From the manner in which the noble Lord had expressed himself, they must think that the qualification could not be less than 100*l.* at the very least. No; the qualification was, that the claimant should be in possession of a 40*s.* freehold. And the only difference made by the present Bill was, that the persons qualified, instead of being as formerly, 40*s.* freeholders, should be 15*l.* leaseholders: a change which he hoped their Lordships would consider an improvement. The noble Lord had likewise said, that the change in the qualification of Jurors was made in opposition to the opinion of the Judges. Now the fact was directly the reverse; for they had, in direct terms, approved of the contemplated change in the qualification. He, therefore, thought that he had a right to complain that the noble Baron should have stated that he had brought forward that measure in opposition to the opinions of the Judges. He had a great respect for the great learning and experience of the Judges of Ireland; but he could not allow that their Lordships were not to legislate on the laws of that country without their consent, or even in opposition to their opinions. That, however, was not the case in the present instance, for they did approve of the measure. He denied another assertion made by the noble Baron—namely, that that Bill had been formerly rejected by the House when brought before them. That was not the case. The Bill had been referred to a Select Committee of the House; but before the Committee could make any Report the Parliament was prorogued, and was soon afterwards dissolved, by which all the previous proceedings fell to the ground. He now came to the main objection stated by the noble Lord. The noble Lord objected to the clause which took from the Sheriff, who is the sworn officer of the Crown, the privilege of choosing Jurors, which, as the law at present stood, was possessed by the Sheriff. The noble Lord stated very justly and properly, that the amount of property was not the proper criterion by which to judge of the qualifications of a man for that duty. He (Lord Plunkett) did not deny, that there was some difficulty in that part of the measure, and he had taken considerable pains to consider it; and he would then state how he hoped to overcome the objection. By the Bill before them, the Barony collectors were to make returns of the names of all persons within their district who were, by right of property, qualified to sit as Jurors. In England that duty was performed by the Overseers of the Poor, but there being no Overseers of the Poor in Ireland, he could not follow that part of Sir Robert Peel's Bill. The returns were to be made by the Collectors to the Clerk of the Peace, and the Justices were empowered at the Quarter Sessions to strike out the names of all improper persons, and to add the names of such as were entitled to have their names inserted. There was also a clause inserted which specially reserved to the Sheriffs all the jurisdiction which they had as the law at present stood. He thought that the noble Baron would more readily approve of that part of the Bill, when he was told that it was adopted on the suggestion of the Twelve Judges. He would add, that he meant, if the Bill went into Committee, to add a clause, by which retail dealers might be added to the list of Special Jurors, if they proved that they were in possession of the sum of 5,000*l.* The noble Lord concluded by saying, that so far from considering it improper to introduce the Bill on account of the Bill which had lately passed that House, the passing of that measure was a strong reason why the present should be adopted.

Lord Wynford's Amendment negatived, and the Bill read a second time.

The following Protest against the Second reading of the Bill was entered on the Journals.

"Dissentient—Because I believe the principle on which a change in the present practice is made, and the provision for forming a Juror's Book, by this Bill, is contrary to the unanimous opinion of the Twelve Judges of Ireland, and will render insecure the lives and properties of his Majesty's loyal subjects in Ireland.

"Clanbrassill (Roden.)
"Wynford.
"Kenyon.
"Carbery."

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, April 2, 1833.

Minutes.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of Mr. E. Ruthven, Copies of the several Bills of Costs furnished by the Irish Crown Solicitors in all Cases, since the 5th July, 1831, an Account of all Money paid on Account of said Bills of Costs.—On the Motion of Mr. Spring Rice, the Number of Parishes in which the provisions of the Act 2nd and 3rd William 4th, cap. 96, had been adopted.

New Writ issued. For the Borough of Dundee, in the room of G. Kinloch, Esq., deceased.

Bills. Read a second time:—Customs; Wharfs Conveying; Stafford Indemnity.

Petitions presented. By Mr. Gully, from Cambridge, against the Disturbances (Ireland) Bill.—By Mr. D. Roche, from Limerick, against the Duty on Soap.—By Mr. Charles Kemeys Tynte, from Chard, against the Personal Estate Tax; from the Political Union of Yeovil, against the Taxes on Knowledge; from the same Place; and by Mr. Cornish, from Totness, for Extending the Right of Election of Magistrates in Corporate Towns.—By Mr. Stuart Mackenzie, from Edderton; by Admiral Fleming, from Strathblane and Baldernock; and by Mr. Maxwell, from Paisley, against the present System of Church Patronage in Scotland.—By Mr. R. Oswald, from the Hand-loom Weavers of Glasgow, for a Board of Trade, and for Relief.—By Mr. Tennyson, from St. Mary, Newington; and by Mr. Wigney, from Brighton, against the Assessed Taxes.—By Mr. John Penton, from Rochdale, by Mr. Calvert, from Bishop Stortford; by Mr. Thicknesse, from the Operatives of several Cotton Mills; by Mr. Hume, from the Manufacturing portion of the County of Gloucester, in favour of a Factories Regulation Bill.—By Major Beauclerk, from Horsham, for a Repeal of the Septennial Act, Vote by Ballot, and an Extension of the Franchise; from Henfield, against the Assessed Taxes.—By Mr. Cayley, from three Places, against the present Disabilities of the Dissenters.—By Mr. H. Grattan, from two Places, for a Repeal of the Union.—By Mr. Hume, from several Places, against the Abuses practised in Corporations.—From Chichester, and other Places, for Relief from Taxation; from Stansfield, against Tithes; from several Political Unions, for Universal Suffrage, Vote by Ballot, and Triennial Parliaments; and from Chatham, &c., against the Disturbances (Ireland) Bill.—By Messrs. Cayley, Townley, Heyett, Wedgwood, Lennard, A. Pelham, and Sir G. Grey, from a great Number of Places,—against Slavery.—By Mr. Tennyson, Mr. Hume, Mr. G. Vernon, and many others, from a Number of Places,—for a Better Observance of the Sabbath.

Distress — Hand-loom Weavers.] Mr. *John Fielden* presented a petition from Padiham, Lancashire, complaining of distress, and stating that the township contains a population of 3,529 persons, and that 246 families, or altogether 1,381 persons, had been visited in January last; that all of these capable of work, excepting four were in full employment; that their average income in wages only amounted to 1*s.* 9*d.* and three-eighths of a penny a head per week; that the rent, fuel, light, and repairs, of the implements on which they work, amounted to 6*d.* and one-eighth of a penny per head per week; leaving these poor persons only 1*s.* 3*d.* and one-eighth per head per week for food and clothing. The hon. Member stated, that this was one of those townships of Lancashire where hand-loom weaving formed a principal branch of the employment of the poor, and was one of those comprised in the survey of thirty-five townships, of which he (Mr. Fielden) had circulated the result, and should take an opportunity of placing a copy in the hands of every hon. Member of the House to morrow morning. The petitioners stated further, that the whole sum received by these poor persons in poor-rate, amounted to no more than 10*l.* 8*s.* 2½*d.* a-week. The petition was most respectably signed, having the names of the clergyman of the Established Church of the place, of the Churchwardens and Overseers, and most of the respectable persons in the township, affixed to it. Mr. Fielden presented another from Blachinworth and Calderbrook, complaining of similar distress; and the hon. Member stated that a great proportion of the poor persons in this township were in the employ of himself and his partners; and the allegations contained in the petitions he of his own knowledge knew to be true. The income, for food and clothing, which the families visited in this township received for each person for one week, was only 1*s.* 6*d.*, that is, for food and clothing; and the Poor-rate distributed amongst them amounts to only 1*l.* 7*s.* 5*d.*; that out of 1,011 persons visited in this township, there were only three out of employ who were capable of working, the others being in full work. Several hon. Members had at divers times expressed doubts as to the truth of the extent of the distress which he had represented to the House. He regretted exceedingly that such doubts should be entertained, because it was calculated to prevent inquiry, and to delay, if not defeat a remedy for this distress. What had been stated by him was either true or false; and if hon. Members residing in the neighbourhood where this distress was represented to exist, would take the pains to inform themselves on the subject, as he (Mr. Fielden) had done, he was satisfied they would arrive at the same conclusions. He had also to present petitions from Langfield, Marsden, and Barrowford, complaining of similar distress: also one from the forest of Rossendale, embracing eight townships enumerated in the survey to which he had before alluded, and one petition from the township of Haslingden; all complaining of the same distress. Upon these the hon. Member remarked that the inhabitants of these townships were engaged in the manufacture of silk, of cotton, and of woollen; the petitions were most numerously and respectably signed, having the names of all, or nearly all, the ministers of the Established Church in the several townships, the Churchwardens and Overseers, many respectable professional men, and many of the most respectable manufacturers and tradesmen in the district from which they came, and he could assure the House that the petitioners were labouring under the severest distress. To show the wretchedness of these poor people, nearly the whole of whom were in full employ (a fact which should not be forgotten, and which was the worst feature in the case, because it was not want of employment, but want of adequate wages for that employment), he could not refrain from reading a letter which he had received from a respectable dissenting minister, though in humble life, in which was described the privation and suffering under which they laboured. The hon. Member read the letter as follows: 'The distress we have witnessed in taking this survey is almost inexpressible. Had I not been an eye-witness of the state of the labouring poor therein contained, I should not have credited their wretched and miserable condition. In some families of six, seven, or eight in number, we find only one bed, and a lap or two of straw. The mistress of one family in particular, of seven in number, said they had only one blanket, and that nearly worn out, and nothing for the cradle, except an old cloak. The clothing of a large number of them is not worth more than 6*s.* or 8*s.*, and one or two years' rent behind; the nauseous smells, and the miserable aspect of some of the inhabitants, are truly distressing, and many there are that say they have not the means of procuring soap either to cleanse themselves or what should be their linen. We are conscious that we have not underrated their income, nor exceeded their number.—(Signed) EDWARD ASHWORTH. P. S.—Potatoes to dinner—half a pound of mutton fat served five meals for five in a family, thin oatmeal porridge for breakfast and supper—bedding and clothing miserable—little children in the cradle only straw to lie on, and covered with a cotton fent.' The House would perhaps allow him to explain that this "cotton fent" was the remnant of the web, at the end of every warp, which is about a yard in length, and is the customary perquisite of the weaver; it was, in short, a yard of cotton calico. The hon. Member next presented a petition from Castleton—the town of Rochdale being partly situated in that township, and the manufacture there is flannel, woollens, and cotton, but principally the two former—complaining of similar distress, and stating that the earnings of the working people only amounted, after the reduction necessarily incurred, to 1*s.* 1*d.* and seven-eighths of a penny per week, for each individual of the families visited, for food and clothing: that, of 2,427 persons visited, there were only seventy-seven persons capable of work who were out of employ. The others were in full employ. He was glad to see the hon. member for Rochdale (Mr. Fenton) in his place; and he would hand over the petition to him, in order that he might bear testimony to the respectability of those who had signed it, there being the names of many of his best friends attached to it. He had also to present petitions from Spotland, Wardleworth, and Wuerdle and Wardle, all situate in and near Rochdale, complaining of similar distress; and it was worthy of observation, that the work in which these poor people were engaged was of a description which had not much competition from power-looms; and, therefore, the argument that power-looms caused the distress could not bear upon this subject, and was indeed, here shown to be untrue. He had another petition from the township of Blackburn, signed by seven persons who had made the survey before alluded to, which stated that the township contained a population of 27,091 persons: that 1,738 families, containing in all 9,772 persons, had been visited by the petitioners: that there were only 452 persons capable of working, who were not in full employment: that the total weekly wages of the families visited amounted to 828*l.* 19*s.* 7*d.* a-week, being an average of 1*s.* 8*d.* and three-eighths of a penny for each person: that the average rent for each person amounted to 3*d.* and five-eighths of a penny per week, and fuel, light, and other indispensable outgoings were threepence-halfpenny per week; these two last items being 7*d.* and one-eighth, which, being deducted from 1*s.* 8*d.* and three-eighths (gross income), left only 1*s.* 1¼*d.* for food and clothing for each individual for one week, in the 9,779 persons in the families visited by the petitioners: that the parish relief received amongst the families visited amounted to no more than 24*l.* 12*s.* 8*d.* per week. He had received a letter from a most respectable professional man in the town of Blackburn, stating that the petitioners who had made this survey, were men of respectability in their situations of life, and that he believed that the examinations had been carefully made, and were as correct as it was possible to get up such returns. Mr. Fielden regretted that any attempt to discredit these statements should have been made, for he believed them to be substantially true. He had taken great pains to inform himself on this subject, both amongst those workmen whom he himself employed, and by inquiring of others in similar employments. In giving directions for these surveys, he had desired the parties to visit those families only whose average income from wages for the whole of the family did not exceed 2*s.* 6*d.* a head a-week, and this had been in most instances observed, but in some cases departed from; and there was one which now came to his mind that he could not help adverting to—that was, the township of Trawden, near Pendle-hill, in Lancashire, where the visitors had given the result of the survey of almost all the families in the township. The population is 2,851. and there were 2,480 persons, six-sevenths of the whole number in the township), whose average income per head a-week, applicable for food and clothing, did not amount to more than twopence-halfpenny per head a-day, and the whole of the families visited were in full employment. It was lamentable to him to have to detail an account of such distress; he knew how painful it was to hon. Members to hear such statements repeated in the House; but, believing them, as he sincerely did, to be true accounts, the subject appeared to him to be so important and so worthy of the serious attention of the Legislature, that if he did not make these representations, however unpalatable, he should be guilty of the grossest dereliction of duty. He would only observe, in passing, that he had laboured, for many years, to prevent this reduction in the value of labour, but without success; he and others had petitioned this House over and over again. In 1829, he and a number of other manufacturers, had, through the medium of Lord Stanley, sent a memorial to Mr. Secretary Peel, detailing the distress which had been then of many years' standing; but instead of receiving relief, soldiers, with their accompaniments, were sent down, and consumed the food which was so much wanted for these poor people! This distress, had been, by some, denied, and the argument used was, that the hands employed in mills were better paid for their labour. But this was no answer to rebut the fact of this distress amongst these poor persons. It was true that those families employed in mills did receive better wages; but it should not be lost sight of, that for one person employed in mills, he believed that there were three, at least, employed in this other description of work, which was so inadequately paid for; and the price for labour in mills was being fast reduced to the wages received by those out of the mills. He and his partners had innumerable applications from persons working for masters who paid less than themselves for mill-hands, not because they were out of work, but with a desire to get into better employment. Indeed two or three hours a day were frequently taken up by one or other of his partners in giving answers to such applicants. In one mill, near to the works of himself and his partners, the proprietors got a certain description of work done at 5*s.* for which he and his partners paid 7*s.* at least; and the effect would be, that they would be compelled (as they had already been in hand-loom weaving) to adopt the prices of those who paid so much less than themselves, or otherwise abandon their business; for it was impossible to contend successfully against such competitors; and thus the wages of mill-hands would be brought to a level with the labour performed in the cottages of the poor, instead of the wages of the latter being advanced to the wages paid in mills. The petitioners all stated, that the value of their labour had been reduced, as measured in the necessaries of life, more than one half, since the close of the war; and they all prayed for a reduction in the price of the necessaries of life to the altered value of their wages. He had now presented those petitions which had already come into his possession, of about twenty townships comprised in the result of the survey which he had promised to put into the hands of hon. Members to-morrow morning, and he would read to the House the result of that survey:—'That, in thirty-five townships, 'the population is 203,349. The families 'visited are 8,362. The persons in these 'families, 49,294, being nearly one-fourth 'of the whole. The number out of work 'in the families visited, is 2,287. The 'number unfit for work in the same, is '23,060. The number of workers is '23,947. The total weekly wages which 'the families visited earn, are 4,447*l.* 18*s.* 'This sum will give for each of those who 'work, a weekly average of 3*s.* 8*d.* and five-'eighths; and for each of the whole 'number of persons visited, a weekly 'average of 1*s.* 9*d.* and five-eighths. The 'rent paid by the families visited is, per 'annum, 32,693*l.* 17*s.* 5*d.* This sum 'gives an average of 3*d.* a-week for each 'individual in the families visited. Fuel, 'light, and wear of implements, will be 'an average for each individual of, at 'least, 3½*d.* a week; and this, with the 'average rent of 3*d.*, being deducted from '1*s.* 9*d.* and five-eighths, the average in-'come of each individual, leaves for food 'and clothing for each individual for a 'week 1*s.* 3*d.* and one-eighth. The whole 'parish relief given weekly to the families 'visited is 139*l.* 7*s.*, or, for each, five-'eighths of a penny; and the average 'income of each for a day, for food and 'clothing, from both wages and relief, is '2¼*d.*' Mr. Fielden next presented a petition from Thomas Vevers, Christopher Tinker, and George Beaumont, of Huddersfield, confirming the account of the distress in that neighbourhood which he (Mr. Fielden) had stated on a former evening to the House. The petitioners stated that, since the examination made in 1832, the wages for merinos, cassanetts, and woollen cords, had been reduced; that the suffering amongst the poor was extreme: that many hands were out of work, that the poor had to sleep upon straw, and to live upon potatoes and oatmeal and water, which they had aptly called "tremblers," being a composition of oatmeal and water boiled, and which is a little thicker than water-gruel, but not of a consistency to be called porridge; that some of them scarcely ever tasted animal food; now-and-then, however, obtaining an onion, which they considered a luxury. The statement of the distress at Huddersfield had been denied by the hon. member for Huddersfield, who was reported to have said in his place in the House, that there were very few persons in that neighbourhood who earned less than 2*s.* a-day, and most of them earned 3*s.* a day. It no doubt was true, that those employed in mills, in that district, were better paid than those employed at their own homes; but the number of the latter far exceeded that of the former, who might be distressed, to the extent described, while the former were better off. He therefore expressed his doubts as to the correctness of the information of the hon. member for Huddersfield; for the accounts which he had given of this distress had been corroborated by many other individuals, and by the result of a partial survey, taken in February last, by which it appeared that there were 120 families, containing 621 persons, whose weekly income did not exceed 1*s.* 2*d.* and seven-eighths of a penny per week; and when the necessary expenses these families had to pay, were made, would reduce their income for food and clothing for each individual to 10*d.* per week, or less than 1½*d.* per day; and which went to confirm the allegations of the petitioners, as well as the statement of Mr. Stocks, on which he (Mr. Fielden) founded his account given to the House on an early evening in the present Session, and which he would now read to the House. Mr. Stocks's statement was, that an examination had been made in 1829, and it showed that, out of a population of 29,000, there were 13,226 who had only an average of 2¼*d.* a day for subsistence. He would read what Mr. Stocks gave him in writing in January last—namely, 'That the condition of the above population is worse 'at the present moment; and it is believed that the average at present would 'not exceed 2*d.* per day for all expenses; 'and that it is believed that 40,000 are in 'the above condition in the upper division of 'Aggbrig, containing 103,384 inhabitants.' These statements were appalling; they were either true or false; and it behoved the hon. member for Huddersfield, and the members for the West Riding of Yorkshire, to make inquiry, and to satisfy themselves and this House, whether such distress did exist; and he hoped that during the recess, they would make particular inquiry on this subject; for it was one to which too much attention could not be paid by hon. Members of this House. If the condition of the labouring poor, who should be the consumers of their own productions and the productions of others, could not be improved, it threatened a dissolution of society. He begged to apologize for the time which he had occupied, but what he had stated to the House appeared to him to be so important, that he trusted he should be excused. In conclusion he would beg leave to read to the House the result of a visit to a number of families near Huddersfield, made by Captain Wood in March, 1832, and communicated to him. The hon. Member read the following statement:—

Scamonden township.

1. Benjamin Sykes—Family seven; weekly income 7*s.*; live upon potatoes and thin water-porridge; no bed clothes; clothes worn out; and nearly naked; rent 36*s.*

2. James Clay—Family seven; in one room, 4 yards by 5; rent 34*s.*; all sleep in one bed; the room holds their loom also; income 6*s.* per week; never any bread or animal food.

3. Mary Sugden—Family of three, weekly income 1*s.* 9*d.*; sleep in corner of loom-room, on straw laid on the floor, without covering except the rags they wore in the day-time; no furniture.

4. William Lamb—family four, weekly income 5*s.*; live upon potatoes, and salt, and thin water porridge; no milk, cannot afford to pay for it; no bread nor meat; has wove 160 yards, and travelled forty-eight miles, for 16*s.* 4*d.*

5. Hannah Parkin, widow—Four children; (left with child, and now incapable of working); income 4*s.* 6*d.* per week; live on oatmeal porridge, without milk, or anything else; no furniture of any kind, except bedstead; when asked, replied "don't know how they live," the poor woman distracted, and children in great want; at present receiving 2*s.* per week from the parish.

6. James Bailey—Family seven; weekly income 5*s.*; live on a little oatmeal and water; all sleep in one bed; no blanket.

7. Joseph Sykes—Family of four; weekly income of 4*s.*; all in one bed, and one blanket; almost starved to death at night.

8. James Dyson—Family four; weekly income 3*s.*; all in one chaff bed, with one blanket; his wife lately confined, and all the nourishment she had was oatmeal and water.

9. William Bottomley—Family nine; rent 3*l.* which had just been distrained for (landlord in possession of all); weekly income 9*s.*; 2*s.* 6*d.* from parish. for which he has to go to Rochdale, twelve miles; labours fourteen hours per day; three beds of straw, with only one blanket in the house; it is nine years old. These wretched beings live on thin water-porridge; they have one gill of milk for breakfast, which the mother mixes among the porridge; for dinner, potatoes; bread never seen in their houses; meat unknown.

Visited about twenty other houses, where the same scenes of misery were found. We took the houses at random. Scamonden has 912 inhabitants; and at least two-thirds will be found in this situation.

A most important feature (showing the hopelessness of their situation), that there was abundance of work, and "more," they said, might be had if they could find time to do it." A man can earn about 5*s.* clear of expenses of winding, per week; out of which he has rent, clothes, and keeping to provide; and in this district a man has generally eighteen miles to walk with his work.

Mr. Stocks, who led me to these scenes of wretchedness, assured me that a population of about 40,000 may be found in the neighbourhood of Huddersfield, of the poorest class, whose daily income will not average 1*d*½. for each person. The visit was made March 1832. JOSEPH WOOD.

Mr. *George W. Wood* was aware that it was not proper to occupy the time of the House in discussing petitions, because, as the subjects of those petitions could not be brought satisfactorily before them, it was impossible that justice could be done to them. He was aware of the distress which existed in some parts of the country, and he considered it to be a subject well worthy of the most attentive consideration of the House. He would, though most reluctantly, offer a few observations on what had fallen from his hon. friend, the member for Oldham, to whom he gave the utmost credit for the purity of his motives, and who, he was sure, would not intentionally mislead the House. He thought, however, that his hon. friend was deceiving himself as to the actual condition of the working people in Lancashire. He had stated what each family had to live on per head per week, and the result of his inquiries appeared to be, that 8,362 families earned only 4,447*l.* per week, which was something about 10*s.* for each family. That statement was obtained, he (Mr. Wood) believed, in January—the season when wages were lowest, and the fewest persons were in employ. The facts also were gathered from the individuals themselves whose condition was the subject of inquiry, and, therefore, it was not unreasonable to suppose that they would make the most unfavourable statement they could of their condition. Their statements were, therefore, not likely to be altogether correct. Besides, it was impossible in such a condition of society that the Poor-rates should be so low as they really were. As to the borough which the hon. Member represented (Oldham), he believed that it was on the whole in a prosperous condition; certainly it had increased in population and manufactures more than any other town in the county of Lancaster. The Poor-rates, with every disposition to do what was necessary for the poor, were smaller in Oldham than in any other town in the same county. The persons whose situation the hon. Member referred to, were the hand-loom weavers. No one could doubt that their condition was by no means prosperous, or that it was not one that the House should endeavour to alleviate; but a false statement had been made as to the general condition of the working classes of that part of the country. He (Mr. Wood) believed that the wages of persons who worked in factories, and who formed the largest portion of the population, were as much per head, or nearly so, as the hon. Member had stated them for a whole family. As respected the entire population of South Lancashire, he knew, from his intercourse with it, that they had been for some years more prosperous than formerly, and that there was nothing like the distress which had been described.

Mr. *Cornish* felt equally conscious with the hon. Member who had just sat down, of the dislike entertained by the House to have its time occupied by lengthened discussions on the numerous petitions presented to it; but he conceived if any occasion would justify an infringement on its time, it was the important and distressing representation that had just been made. He regretted that such a momentous statement should have been made to so scanty a House—a House scarcely comprising twenty members. [“*No, no.*”] Yes, yes. He had counted the House while the petitions were presenting, and there were not more than a score Members in it. The attention of the House had been frequently called by petitions from all parts of the country to the state of its distress. No Parliament ever met with the people under such excited expectations: yet that Parliament had sat two months, and to this hour not only no efficient remedy had been suggested, but not even an investigation into the cause of the distress had been proposed. Possibly the evil lay too deep for eradication; but he hoped that his Majesty's Ministers would at once proceed to institute an inquiry into the cause of the calamity, and if this were done, although it should be out of the reach of legislative redress, the people would be satisfied that proper exertions had been made, and that this House had done its duty.

Mr. *Cobbett* regretted the thinness of the House at the time his hon. colleague was reading the petitions which he had just presented to the House. No details, —no authentic documents, had been brought forward in contradiction of the statements made by his hon. friend. He was satisfied of the truth of every thing which his hon. colleague had stated to the House, and he trusted that the House, at last, would think proper to adopt some measure of permanent relief. Let the taxes be taken off, in order that the poor man might get the pot of porter for a 1*d*. instead of 4*d*.—a pound of sugar for 2*d*. instead of 7*d*.—and a pound of soap for 2*d*. instead of 6*d*. or 7*d*. "Ay," but said the Government, if you talk about taking off the taxes, "we can't do without the taxes, and we can't afford to take any off."

Mr. *Hawes* rose to order. He would ask the Speaker whether the hon. Gentleman was strictly confining himself to the question that was before the House? If an hon. Member was to occupy the House upwards of an hour upon one question, it would be impossible to accomplish the object for which the House then sat, which was the presentation of petitions.

The *Speaker* said, since the alteration in the presentation of petitions, when an hon. Member presented a number of petitions upon a variety of subjects, it was difficult for him to say, on the question that they do lie on the Table, whether any hon. Gentleman confined himself to any of the questions embraced by the petitions. In the mean time, he would only say, that there was no species of distress that could exist but what was alluded to by the hon. Member (Mr. Fielden); therefore the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cobbett) was not out of order.

Mr. *Cobbett* was merely telling the House the way in which they could relieve the distresses of these poor people. There was the sum of 16,000*l*. they had voted for the Museum. If that sum were applied in the manner suggested by his hon. colleague, it would double the wages of 938 families, consisting of 4,960 persons, and that by merely taking away from the loungers of the British Museum the privileges they at present possessed. There were the 113 Privy Councillors, who, according to a statement that had never yet been contradicted, divided amongst themselves 650,000*l*. Let them take that away, and distribute it amongst the people, and it would relieve 180,555 persons. The people could only be relieved by applications of this sort; and this was what the people knew, and must know; and the ladies must be struck off the Pension-list, and the sinecures must be swept away. If they were to take away only the money that was prodigally spent, the people would be greatly relieved; and he believed Ministers were anxious, and would be even glad to do that; and they would get rid of sinecures and pensions if they were supported by this House. They wanted the House to back them, and to support them in putting down the squandering. He believed the money squandered would amount to more than double the wages of these persons in the northern and western manufacturing districts of the country. Nothing was wanted to put down the present waste of the public money, but the House to back the Ministers, and to enable them to do it; and when he brought forward his Motion relative to the Stamps—which he should do to-morrow evening—he should then show how the people became poorer and poorer; for, by inquiring into the causes of poverty, they would be able to prevent people from becoming poor. These poor people had barracks full of soldiers to take care of them; and when they saw a lusty soldier covered all over with fine lace, and a fat, shining horse, that cost as much as seven families of seven children, it was a miracle they suffered so long and so patiently as they did. He hoped the House would take this matter into consideration as soon as possible. He suggested to his hon. friend the propriety of moving for the printing of these Petitions, and for a Committee of Inquiry, that the House might be properly prepared to meet this tremendous subject. He believed there were no hon. Members in that House so hard-hearted as not to be willing to give this subject their closest attention.

An *Hon. Member*, in rising to bear testimony to the truth of the statement of the petition which had been presented by the hon. member for Oldham (Mr. Fielden) felt bound to complain of the course pursued by his hon. colleague. Though it might be competent to that hon. Member, if he thought fit to address the House at length, to bring forward statements as to the distress of the country, yet in those statements he thought he ought to avoid introducing discussions which might have a tendency to make the people discontented.

Mr. *Fielden*, in reply, said, that the best answer to the hon. member for Lancashire, was contained in a letter which he received yesterday, and which contained a report of a speech of Mr. George Smith who was chairman of one of the Committees for securing the return of the right hon. the Vice-President of the Board of Trade for Manchester. It spoke for itself, and, without saying one word more on the subject, he would only detain the House while he read it. At the election dinner to celebrate the return of Mark Phillips, esq. and the right hon. Poulett Thomson, as representatives for the town of Manchester, on the 28th December, 1832, on the health of the working classes being drunk, Mr. Smith said, 'Being extensively connected with the 'working classes, I beg leave to reply to 'that toast. Our house employs certainly 'upwards of 1,000 of those miserable 'beings, the hand-loom calico weavers, 'and we pay all this host of work-people 'with from 250*l.* to 300*l.* per week, pro'bably an average of about 5*s.* 6*d.* per head 'per week, [*Cries of "Shame, shame;"*] 'and lest you should think that our house 'is fattening on the vitals of those poor 'people, I will state to you a fact which 'I would not otherwise have stated—'namely, that the last year our house 'manufactured and sold 200,000 pieces of 'hand-loom calicoes. We conducted our 'business with as much economy as pos'sible. We made no bad debts, and yet, 'at the year's end, we had not gained an 'average profit of a 1*d.* per piece. I 'mention this to show you that all that 'can be afforded to the weaver is given to 'him.'

Petitions to lie on the Table.

Political Unions.] Sir *John Tyrrell*, in putting the question to the noble Lord opposite regarding certain franks said to have been given to the members of the Political Unions by a member of the Government, stated that he thought it due to the character not only of the Government generally, but to the individual character of the noble Lord himself, who denied all knowledge of the Unions, to the noble Earl at the head of the Government, and to the hon. Member who had made the assertion, and who was ready to repeat it, that a satisfactory answer should be given to his question, not only by the noble Lord himself, but by the Government. If the answer of the noble Lord was satisfactory, he would let the matter drop; but if not, he reserved to himself the privilege of proceeding further.

Lord *Althorp* said, that though the hon. Baronet had given notice that he should put a question to him, he had sat down without putting any question, but from the statement made by him last night, he could understand to what the hon. Baronet alluded. He wished to know whether a statement made by the hon. member for Tralee was correct, in saying, that a member of the Government had, during the period they were out of office, given fifty franks to members of the Political Unions, in order to excite those Political Unions to petition for their return to power. When the matter was stated by the hon. Member, he at once declared that he knew nothing of it, and the hon. Member then said, he had no objection, if required, to mention the name of the person to whom he had alluded. The hon. Member accordingly mentioned privately to him, that the member of the Government alluded to was Earl Grey. He, therefore, had mentioned the subject to Earl Grey, who denied positively having franked any letters at all at that time. He had also spoken to Earl Grey's Private Secretary, who stated, that he had no recollection of any thing of the kind. At the same time that the Private Secretary admitted that he might have franked two or three letters, for persons who had requested him to do so, without being aware of their contents. But he denied positively having franked letters for the purposes stated by the hon. Member.

Mr. *Maurice O'Connell* said, that the statement had been made to him by a Mr. Rushton, who met Mr. Joseph Parkes (a well-known leader in the Birmingham Political Union), when Mr. Parkes said, "See, I have got several franks, which are directed to members of the Political Unions. They are official franks, and are signed by Earl Grey." Mr. Rushton was ready to give evidence at the Bar of the House to that effect.

Lord *Althorp* said, that the hon. Gentleman must be aware that it was not usual for Members of the Government to give these official franks. He certainly knew Mr. Parkes well, but he believed that at the period in question he was not a Member of The Birmingham or any other Political Union.

Mr. *Charles Wood* having been referred to by his noble friend, must positively deny that he had ever given a frank, knowing it to be intended for any Political

Union; with the exception, that at that time great numbers of addresses were sent to Earl Grey, which it was his duty as Private Secretary to the noble Earl to answer. But he had never, on any occasion, made use of an expression in those letters which even implied the existence of Political Unions.

Sir *John Tyrrell* said, he hoped that the noble Lord would not think, that he was going too far when he stated his intention, notwithstanding the explanation given, of persevering in his Motion. He would, however, do so, because he thought the denial of the Government of the statement made to the hon. member for Tralee, involved the character of a gentleman of respectability, who was a barrister. He would take the opportunity, too, of asking whether a report current was true—that one of the members of the Government was a member of a Political Union? He did not know but he might go further, and move for a return of all the members of his Majesty's Government who were members of Political Unions. The hon. Baronet concluded by moving that Messrs. Parkes and Rushton be examined at the Bar of the House to-morrow.

An *Hon. Member* said, that it appeared to him nothing more nor less than a cock and a bull story, the foundation for which was mere hearsay: he had never heard so frivolous or ill-founded a charge. If the House paid any serious or lengthened attention to it, they would not only be deservedly laughed at by the whole country, but the people would have good reason for making a serious complaint that the time of the House was occupied in this ridiculous and reprehensible manner, when affairs of such moment ought to be under discussion.

Mr. *O'Connell* did not see how this, if it were true even, could be called a charge against Government, for it appeared to him that if they had been in any way instrumental in raising the Political Unions, or had given those Unions any information on which to act, he thought the Ministers had done a very wise and meritorious thing, for it was owing to the Unions that Reform had been carried. The Motion had only been brought forward for the purpose of showing that, whereas political agitation was stirred up here by responsible persons, the same sort of political agitation, and those who stirred it up, in Ireland, were hunted down and utterly excommunicated.

Lord *Althorp* said, he did not believe what had been asserted; but true, or not, he put it to the House whether there were any grounds for going into the matter, and examining witnesses, because if the whole of the circumstances stated were perfectly true, it would be ridiculous to found on them a charge against the Government.

Mr. *Robert Palmer* thought, that the explanation which had been given was perfectly satisfactory. He did not see how Gentlemen who gave blank covers could be responsible for their contents; and this appeared to be the present case. He trusted the hon. Baronet would not press his Motion.

Sir *John Tyrell* certainly would not press his Motion against what appeared to be the opinion of the House; but he protested against the interpretation which had been put upon his motives. He would only say, that there appeared to him a very great difference between National Political Unions and Conservative Clubs.

Motion withdrawn.

Poor Laws (Ireland).] Lord *Althorp* laid on the Table, by command, the Report of the Poor Law Commissioners. The noble Lord stated, that it contained only extracts from the evidence, not the whole of the evidence.

Mr. *O'Connell* wished to take that opportunity of clearing up a misconception which he believed to have gone forth—namely, that he intended to make a Motion for giving Poor Laws to Ireland. This was incorrect; he might have thrown out some intimation on the subject, but he had given no decided notice. He would say, most decidedly, that from having read the extracts referred to, it would be impossible for him to acquiesce in any system of Poor Laws for Ireland: among all the misfortunes of his unhappy country, it had still the consolation of having hitherto avoided the Poor Laws.

Mr. *Richards* had paid considerable attention to the subject, and had but lately arrived from Ireland, where he had also taken great pains in inquiring on this point; and since this visit he had become more convinced than ever as to the expediency and absolute necessity of this House passing some Act for providing for the indigent and half-starving poor of Ireland.

Mr. *Hume* said, this was a question of

the most extreme importance. He intreated the House, before they proceeded to give Poor Laws to Ireland, first, to institute a strict inquiry into the monstrous abuses of the Poor Laws in England—abuses which were among the most destructive evils with which this country was afflicted, and which, unless some strong measures were adopted to put an end to them, would, ere long, bring ruin on the country. When they had looked into and corrected the abuses here, then he would say, give Ireland the benefit of the amended Poor Laws. But do not give Ireland the additional affliction of Poor Laws as they stood now.

Colonel *Wood* was in favour of the proposed measure, as a charitable and humane provision for the miserably indigent poor of Ireland. With respect to what had fallen from the hon. member for Middlesex, it did not seem to him to bear on the case, for it was quite a different thing to introduce a new system free from the errors of the old system into a country, and to set about revising so long existent and complicated code of Poor Laws, as was acted upon in this country. He trusted that the hon. member for Knaresborough would persevere; and without waiting till the Poor Laws were cleared from all abuses in England, would give to the Irish a system of Poor Laws purged from the evils and abuses to which the hon. member for Middlesex had alluded.

Mr. *Pease* said, he hoped the hon. member for Knaresborough, when he brought forward this Motion, would be fully prepared to submit to the House some definite plan. There had been a great deal said on this subject, but hitherto he must confess he had not heard any practicable suggestion. Our system of Poor Laws, it was very universally asserted, would not be applicable to Ireland. No other practicable suggestion, however, had been offered; but he trusted that as the hon. member for Knaresborough intended bringing the matter before the House, he would, at the same time, come provided with some practicable plan.

Mr. *Henry Grattan* said, that whoever had witnessed the frightful state of misery and disease in Ireland, must, if he were possessed of any feelings of humanity, advocate the introduction of Poor Laws into that country. In the great streets in Dublin, the number and condition of the poor was frightful; so urgent was their distress, that they were not content with merely asking casual charity, but they might be seen knocking with double or treble knocks at the great people's houses, and when the door, is opened thrusting themselves in, and demanding sustenance for themselves and their starving children. Some hon. Gentlemen and the absentees did not like Poor Laws; they were alarmed lest they should not get off without paying any longer. As an instance of the difference between what those who lived where there were Poor Laws had to pay, and those who lived where there were not Poor Laws, he would state, that for a few acres he had in Surrey, he paid as much in support of the poor, as the Lord Lieutenant of Wicklow did with all his large property. Since there was a union of the countries, let there be also a union of advantages. Before the introduction of Poor-rates here, England was not in a much better state than Ireland is in now.

Sir *Robert Peel* said, that before the House came to a determination of introducing Poor-laws into Ireland, they ought to be fully satisfied that they were beneficial. He thought it very probable that the introduction of Poor-laws there would only serve to dry up the present fruitful sources of charity. He would not have Government do anything till the Report of the Commissioners had been carefully examined; then he would have them appoint a Commission composed of men the most suitable that could be found, for the purpose of inquiring into the exact state of the poor of Ireland, and to see how far in their judgment Poor-laws were applicable.

CHURCH REFORM (IRELAND).] On the Motion of Lord Althorp, the House resolved itself into a Committee on Church Temporalities (Ireland).

Lord *Althorp* said, that in moving the second Resolution, he felt it necessary to make a very few observations. The discussion which took place last night, and the speech of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, had a very close application to what he was about to state. The right hon. Gentleman and others objected to the principle of laying the tax on the present incumbents for the purpose of relieving the people of Ireland from the Vestry-cess. In making that proposition, some time ago, he observed that he had every reason to believe, from all the inquiries which his Majesty's Government had made on the subject, that the clergy of the Church of Ireland would not feel any objection to the tax which was about to be thus imposed on them. His right hon. friend, Mr. Stanley, who was not now a Member of the House, had written down what he had authorized him (Lord Althorp) to state with reference to this point. His right hon. friend said, "In all the conversations which I have had with the primates and the clergy, there never was any objection taken to the principle of taxing the present incumbents. Many of them expressed an anxious wish to me that no difference should be made between them and their successors." When he spoke thus on the occasion to which he referred, he therefore had reason to hope that the clergy of Ireland had no objection to the proposition. That was the foundation on which he expressed his opinion. Now, it undoubtedly did turn out that many of the clergy of Ireland did object to the system of taxation proposed; and he was perfectly ready to say, that if any other mode of relieving the people of Ireland from the Vestry-cess could be pointed out or discovered, which would be advantageous to the clergy, by rendering the proposed tax unnecessary, he should not object to it. It was, however, under all circumstances, an object of such importance that the Vestry-cess in Ireland should cease—of such importance to the Church itself—of such importance to the interests of the Establishment in Ireland—and almost to the very existence of the Church—that this cause of dissatisfaction should be removed—that he could not recede from it. He did not think that, in making this proposition, he was inflicting any hardship on individuals, and still less did he feel, that he was submitting to the House a project which was at variance with the interests of the Church. The Committee must see, that the proposition did not apply to the present incumbents only, but that it imposed the tax generally. If, however, in the consideration of this question, any mode could be found for providing for the Vestry-cess without touching the present incumbents, he should be most glad to adopt it. But still he must contend that, if such a substitute were not found, it was yet most desirable that the sacrifice contemplated should be made for the interests of Ireland, and especially for the interests of the Church of Ireland. To protect and relieve the people of Ireland it was desirable that this Vestry-cess should no longer be levied. The right hon. Gentleman last night confined himself almost entirely to the poor clergy; he, however, could not see, in the present state of information on the subject, how he could alter the tax as it was now proposed to be collected. He should be well pleased, however, if any other mode were shown by which the impost could be avoided. The right hon. Gentleman had argued the question on the effect which this tax would have on the parochial clergy in Ireland, and he had adduced many instances of the severe privations which it would impose. But the Committee would observe, that a very large portion of the tax would not fall on the parochial clergy, but on the hierarchy of Ireland; and the *argumentum ad misericordiam* could not, therefore, be advanced with all that force and effect which the right hon. Gentleman seemed last night to attach to it. The right hon. Gentleman stated, that in the proposition which had been brought forward no distinction was made between the different sorts of Vestry-cess in Ireland. Now, on the grounds which he had laid down before, he had confined himself to that cess which was levied by exclusively Protestant vestries. There was a great distinction between that and the other regular charges on the land, which varied according to circumstances, as the right hon. Gentleman had said. But the hardship on the people was, that a Vestry exclusively Protestant had at present the right of increasing at their pleasure an assessment which others who had no share in apportioning it were obliged to pay. This was a hardship that pressed peculiarly on the people of Ireland, and therefore the Roman Catholic owners and occupiers of land felt it severely. He must again insist on the necessity of removing the Vestry-cess, and must say, that if no other mode could be devised for getting rid of it, Parliament had better agree to the proposition of his Majesty's Ministers. With respect to the proposition of the right hon. member for Montgomeryshire, that the schedule which was appended to the Bill should be attached to this Resolution, it appeared to him that it would make no difference in the discussion, whether it were placed there or not. He, therefore, felt no unwillingness to concede the point.

Sir *Robert Peel* had last night made an appeal to the justice of the House, and if that appeal had been successful, the House would not be to blame in listening to it and doing justice. He hoped that the noble Lord concurred in his views, that if the Vestry-cess ought to be abolished, it ought not to be imposed on the present incumbents. If the noble Lord concurred in that, he would ask him not to force the Committee to come to a division. The noble Lord said, that the removal of the cess was necessary, but he believed the noble Lord had overrated the burthen. The noble Lord stated it at 60,000*l.*; but let the noble Lord inquire further, and he would find the exclusive Vestry-cess did not amount to so much. Let the noble Lord too, above all, consider, that it was not necessary to pass the Resolutions immediately. Perhaps, if the Vestry-cess were abolished immediately, the noble Lord could provide for it by a vote of public money. [Lord *Althorp* was understood to say across the Table that he meant to do that for the present year.] Why, then, if the noble Lord intended it, let him not hasten the question to decision—let him not make it a party dispute. He was ready to meet the noble Lord half-way. All he asked at present was, that the noble Lord should grant them a short delay. Let the noble Lord withdraw the Resolutions and introduce them after the recess, and after an opportunity of fully considering the subject. He was ready to concede the principle, that the Vestry-cess should be abolished, and a provision made for the charges which that cess was levied to defray out of the revenues of the Church. But he asked for delay, that the arrangement should be just as well as complete.

Lord *Althorp* said, as there would be many opportunities to amend the Resolutions in a future stage, he hoped that no delay would then be interposed. The second Resolution being a money Resolution must be again moved in a Committee of the whole House. He believed that there was then an understanding between him and the right hon. Gentleman, that the Amendment should not be moved. He proposed that they should assent to the Resolutions, and that provision should be made hereafter, that those Resolutions should not be carried further than the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman.

Sir *Robert Peel* hoped, that the noble Lord, as a Minister of the Crown, would expressly admit, that all existing interests should be exempted. If that were the case, he was little inclined to stickle for forms, and should advise his hon. friends to permit the Resolutions to pass, with the understanding that they should not be restricted in proposing any alterations in the Bill they thought proper hereafter. It was most proper, in consenting to these Resolutions, that they should take care that existing interests were not exposed to difficulties.

Mr. *Wynn* said, that the Committee ought not to vote a general sum without knowing what was the actual sum required. It was usual for Committees to vote not merely that a tax should be levied, but that a tax should be levied of a certain amount. The noble Lord did not seem to be quite certain of the amount of the exclusive Vestry-cess, and that should be precisely stated before the Resolutions were voted. It would be better, in his opinion, to delay the whole matter till after the holidays, or at least till Government could put the House into possession of correct information as to the sum demanded.

Lord *Althorp* said, the argument of the right hon. Gentleman opposite related to the difference between taxing the present and the future incumbents. On that point he did not think the Committee could then come to a decision. The right hon. Gentleman was willing to let the Resolutions pass, provided he (Lord Althorp) admitted a certain qualification which was formerly alluded to—or, if that were declined, provided that he would, as a member of the Government, pledge them not to bring forward a proposition for imposing a tax on the present incumbents. Situated as he was, he could only say, that he was prepared to give the proposition his most serious consideration. That he would say, and more he could not say.

Mr. *Shaw* certainly thought, that in common justice, the existing interests of the present incumbents should not be burthened with this tax. The noble Lord had greatly exaggerated the amount of Vestry-cess that was devoted to purely ecclesiastical purposes when he estimated it at 60,000*l.* or 70,000*l.* a-year. He (Mr. Shaw) had taken great pains to ascertain the amount levied by the exclusive vestries, and the result of his inquiry was, that it did not amount to more than

28,000*l.* per annum. He believed that it averaged about 20*l.* for every parish Church in Ireland. Now, he would beg to propose as a substitute for that cess, if it was to be done away with, that as there was a debt due to the Board of First Fruits of 400,000*l.*, that sum should be paid, and put out at interest, so as to make up for the amount of this cess. The surplus of the revenues of the Bishopric of Derry might be also applied to that purpose. He felt indebted to the noble Lord for the concessions which he had made, and he was therefore inclined to go as far as he could to meet him; but he must say that the principle of the Bill could never meet with his concurrence. It went to invade all the rights of property, and unquestionably its tendency was to exterminate the Protestant religion in Ireland. He hoped that the tax which the noble Lord intended to impose would not be thrown solely upon the clergy, but that the absentees and the landed proprietors would be made to bear their proportion of it. Above all, the lay impropriators ought to bear a full share. In one diocese alone according to the Parliamentary Returns; the income of lay impropriators under the Tithe Composition Act, was above 12,000*l.* per annum, and a large income besides, from land not compounded for, and yet the whole sum annually paid in that diocese by impropriators for the service of the Church, was but 80*l.* Was it, then, just to tax the clergyman—not only for his own parish from which he did derive an income, but also for the neighbouring parish of a lay impropriator from which the Church derived no income? The clergy of Ireland had, for the last few years, been suffering under the most accumulated oppression. Not long since, they had their incomes reduced, on an average, of from ten to twenty per cent under the Tithe Composition Act, in order to secure a quiet and certain payment. Then, last year, fifteen per cent to the landlords, with the prospect of a further loss, by selling their interests at sixteen years' purchase, and buying land at twenty; and were they in addition to all that, to suffer a loss of from five to fifteen per cent by the present measure? Would any other profession bear such injustice? Would the officers of the Army suffer themselves to be taxed for the building and repairing barracks; or lawyers for Courts of Justice? No; but they were represented in the House, and the clergy were unrepresented. He entreated hon. Members to grant the same measure of justice to that oppressed and comparatively defenceless body, which they would require for themselves. He was sure that if the noble Lord would re-consider the question, he would have no difficulty in finding a substitute for this tax. He had no wish to divide the House, or go further into the question at present, as it seemed to be the general feeling that it would be better that the question should not be now discussed. He trusted, however, that the noble Lord would consent to introduce the words he had suggested into this Resolution. It should be recollected that the clergy were in a situation of the greatest distress, and that for the last three years they had received hardly any of their incomes. He had a statement which was read at the meeting over which the Bishop of London presided, and in the correctness of which he reposed implicit faith — showing that the large majority of the Irish clergy had received comparatively little of their incomes for the last two years and a half. At present the clergy had to depend upon any assistance which might be afforded them by the humane, and those who could respect their distress, and appreciate their privations. They had to struggle with the greatest difficulties. He knew the privations which many learned and pious clergymen and their families had been exposed to. It would be painful to the House if he were to state circumstances which had come to his knowledge on this subject. It was only yesterday morning that he received a communication from an old and high-minded clergyman of the Established Church in Ireland, in which he stated that his family and himself were denying themselves in every way, and that they spent only 3*s.* a week in bread, the rest of their sustenance being made up by potatoes, of which (he thanked God!) there had been a fine crop. He added, that his whole family bore their privations with the greatest cheerfulness. This letter was not written in the spirit of complaint, nor could the writer have the least idea that any portion of it would be made public. He was sure that there was not a man in the House who would not cheerfully contribute to relieve the clergy from such a miserable situation, whereas it was well known, that it was only one of several.

Mr. *Warburton* was extremely glad to hear the manner in which the suggestion of the right hon. Baronet (Sir R. Peel) below him was received. He quite agreed to the principle laid down by the hon. member for the University of Dublin, that they should deal tenderly with existing interests, however they dealt abstractedly with the property of the Church in general. He had so strong an objection to a tax upon particular interests, that if it had not been for the promise of the noble Lord, he should certainly have felt himself called upon to vote against the second Resolution.

Mr. *Gillon*, rather than impede the progress of the Bill, would withdraw the Amendment of which he had given notice; but, in doing so, he hoped he should not be considered as supporting a Church Establishment either in Ireland or elsewhere. Those who had expressed so much commiseration for the Establishment in Ireland, would do better to commiserate the starving people of that country. When it was considered how much the Protestant Establishment—for he would not dignify it by the name of a Church—had contributed to the over-taxation of the people of Ireland, it was not to be wondered at that they regarded the payment of a clergy from whom they derived no benefit as a monstrous oppression.

Mr. *Andrew Johnstone* was glad that his hon. friend avowed his hostility to the Establishment in an open, manly manner. The Church had less to dread from avowed foes, than from the undermining of concealed enemies. But he denied that the sentiments of his hon. friend were participated in by the people of Scotland. He was himself an office-bearer of the Church of Scotland; but he considered this to be a common cause to Scotland and England. The Church of England, in his opinion, was now on its trial. He had heard a great many theoretical statements; but he had made up his mind to defend, upon all occasions, the Established Churches both of England and Scotland. He expressed his satisfaction at the concessions which had been made by the noble Lord. It was said, that there were two parties in this case—the people and the Church; but, for his own part, he was prepared to say, that by supporting the Church Establishment in Ireland, they would be supporting the interest of the people themselves. He did not mean to say that great abuses did not exist in that Church; but if it were as it ought to be—if clergymen were appointed who were capable of instructing the people in their vernacular language—great good would arise from the Establishment. If it was only to be an engine of political patronage, it could not be doubted that it was a great evil.

Mr. *Cuthbert Rippon* observed, that religion was a purely personal conviction. He would ask, whether any one ought to be compelled to pay for supporting a form of worship which he believed to be contrary to the Word of God? Was it not monstrous to attempt to control men's consciences? Was it just, that Parliament should interfere with the means of salvation? If such an event as a religious revolution were to take place; if the Roman Catholics should again be elevated to supremacy, and the Protestants of England compelled to pay for the support of their clergy, would they not consider it a monstrous invasion of their rights? He would only appeal to Gentlemen to do to others as they would be done by. It was, perhaps, premature at that time to enter into this part of the question; but he thought it necessary to make these remarks, in consequence of the observations of the hon. Member who spoke last. He was himself a member of the Church of England, yet he did not find fault with another because "he sees salvation on the same hill-top, but treads another path to reach it."

Mr. *Estcourt* said, if the debate continued, and took an angry tendency, he should deeply lament any circumstance which had raised such opposition. He would agree to the Resolution, on the understanding that the noble Lord (Lord Althorp) would take into his serious consideration—according to the understood meaning of that phrase—the suggestion of the right hon. Baronet the member for Tamworth.

Mr. *Faithfull* said, he would only make a few remarks, in order to protect himself from the charge of inconsistency, if his vote now should appear to differ from that which he should give when the noble Lord brought in his Bill. He concurred in all that part which referred to taking away; but he did not approve of that mode in which what was taken away was to be appropriated. He regretted that it was not to be applied to the relief of the people, instead of being still applied to the purposes of the Church.

The Resolution agreed to.

The House resumed.

Military Flogging.] The Report on the Mutiny Bill was brought up.

On the question that it be received,

Mr. *Hume* rose to move the clause of which he had given notice, "That it shall not be lawful to inflict corporal punishment by flogging on any private soldier, corporal, or non-commissioned officer in the Army or Militia of the United Kingdom, within the United Kingdom, anything herein contained to the contrary notwithstanding." He felt anxious to know whether Ministers would not attempt to carry into effect those opinions which they had advocated when out of office. He thought the time was now come when they ought to accomplish those measures which they had formerly supported. A charge had been made against those who advocated the abolition of flogging in the Army, that they wished to ruin the discipline of the Army. He would never admit that; and he would only reply to the charge by stating this fact—that there were some regiments in which there was no flogging, and in which, notwithstanding this, discipline was maintained as well as in those where flogging was frequent, if not better. On the 15th of March, 1824, on the third reading of the Mutiny Bill, he (Mr. Hume) had had the honour to move the following clause: "And be it further 'enacted, that it shall not be lawful to inflict corporal punishment, by flogging, on 'any private soldier, corporal, or non-'commissioned officer, in the Army or 'Militia of the United Kingdom, within 'the United Kingdom, anything herein 'contained to the contrary notwithstanding.' He was seconded by the gallant member for Nottingham (Sir Ronald Ferguson). The House divided—for the Clause, 47; against it, 127: Majority, 80. The following hon. Members voted with the Minority:—Lord Althorp, Alex. Baring, J. W. Denison, Lord Duncannon, Sir R. Ferguson, W. James, T. F. Kennedy, Hon. G. Lamb, T. B. Lennard, Dr. Lushington, W. L. Maberly, Sir George Phillips, T. S. Rice, Sir Matthew W. Ridley, J. Smith, A. W. Robarts, Alderman Wood, Sir John Wrottesley.—Tellers, John Cam Hobhouse, Joseph Hume.* He was sorry not to see in his place the right hon. the Secretary for Ireland (Sir J. C. Hobhouse), who had stated his opinion very distinctly on the subject. On the third reading of the Mutiny Bill in 1827, on the 12th of March, Mr. Leycester moved, that a clause be brought up to rescind the provisions for the infliction of corporal punishment in the British Army.† Lord Nugent supported it. Mr. Hobhouse said—'He had attentively listened 'to what had fallen from gallant Officers 'in the army on the subject; but the only 'reason they gave for defending it that he 'could discover was, that it ought to be con-'tinued because it had existed. But this, 'he thought, was bad reasoning, and not 'such as should induce the House to con-'tinue such a degradationon our brave de-'fenders. He had heard an officer say, that 'in his regiment some of the men were 'brought out so frequently to be flogged, that 'they were known by the name of the flog-'ging blocks, and this circumstance demon-'strated that, so far from flogging making 'them better soldiers or men, no good 'could be derived from it; and as no 'benefit resulted from the revolting custom, 'it ought to be abolished, as being a 'national disgrace, and as placing our 'army, in its discipline and honour, second 'to that of France. He hoped that no 'Session would be suffered to pass away 'without some effort being made to relieve 'the soldiers from this abominable punish-'ment.'‡ A similar opinion was espoused by all those who supported his Motion; and it was very strongly supported; on the occasion to which he had referred. He should hope that the noble Lord and those who were now in power would put an end to a system which they formerly characterized as a most brutal custom, and a disgrace to the nation. He could not understand why Englishmen should be treated like brutes. He could not believe that such a system was necessary for the preservation of discipline, because it only made men desperate whom a milder punishment would restore to a sense of duty. The experiment had been tried in some regiments of abolishing flogging; it had been found to succeed; and he could not understand why it should not be extended to every regiment in the army. The Mutiny Act supplied many other military punishments besides this, which was so derogatory to the national character; and the fact was, that flogging was inflicted merely because officers had it in their power; whereas, if they were deprived of that power, they would find many other means which would effect all the objects which they could have in view. It was impossible to let this subject sleep in a Reformed Parliament. The punishment of slaves was confined to fifteen lashes. Could it be necessary for maintaining the discipline of the army to subject the soldiers to 200, 300, and 500? In addition to any other punishment Courts-martial may direct "the offenders to be marked on the left side, two inches below the armpit, with the letter D, an inch long, and with gunpowder, not liable to be obliterated." He trusted that such a punishment, which perpetuated the disgrace, and tended to destroy all feelings favourable to reformation in the soldier, was never carried into effect. He concluded by moving the clause to which he had referred.

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* Hansard (new series) x. pp. 1031, 1039.

† Ibid. xvi. p. 1124

‡ Ibid. p. 1126.

Mr. *Lennard* said, that the hon. member for Middlesex had mentioned him as one of the persons who formerly voted with him for the abolition of flogging in the army, and he would be proud to vote with him again to attain the same object. He held the practice in the utmost detestation. The country was constantly hearing accounts of punishments inflicted on soldiers which would not be allowed to be applied to criminals convicted of the most atrocious offences. Why, he asked, should the British soldier be thus proscribed? The soldiers of other countries were not subjected to that degrading punishment; and he could not conceive that there was anything peculiar in the character of his countrymen which rendered the application of the lash necessary. It was an anomaly that one description of punishment should be applied to officers, and another to privates. It was contrary to the principle of justice that there should be any inequality of punishments. The argument urged in support of ogging was, that the private soldiers were so bad a set of men that they could not be kept in order without it; but it was the punishment of flogging which deterred a better class of men from entering the army. Abolish the punishment, its alleged cause, which was in reality its effect, would quickly disappear.

Mr. *Robert Grant*, having taken charge of the Bill in the absence of his right hon. friend, (Sir J. C. Hobhouse), felt called upon to make one or two observations which should deserve attention for their candour if not for their solidity. No official connexion should induce him to vote against the clause of the hon. member for Middlesex, if he felt the zeal for the abolition of this punishment, and the conviction of its inutility, which unquestionably animated him and many of the opponents of military flogging. Finding, however, that by far the majority of well-informed military men, those who were best able to judge, and on whose judgment he placed the greatest reliance, being the great majority of those who had to administer the law, were in favour of the continuance of the power now exercised, and thinking that their consent and approbation ought to be obtained before so great a change was made, he could not bring himself to vote in favour of the proposition. There was no doubt that in this, as in other respects, the army of Great Britain was in a gradual state of improvement, and he did not think it would be safe to disturb the steady course of that amelioration by a measure of injudicious haste. With every disposition, therefore, to adopt the Amendment, he did not feel sufficient reliance upon his own judgment to warrant him in supporting it by his vote. He rejected the clause with reluctance, almost amounting to pain, but at the same time, with a clear conscience. With respect to the other punishments alluded to by the hon. member for Middlesex, they were never carried into effect except the marking, and that was only done when desertion rendered a conspicuous mark necessary. He admitted that this punishment too was a painful and a degrading one, but he had the consolation of knowing that it was never carried into effect with severity.

Mr. *Mildmay* was aware of the opinion which prevailed amongst persons in the army, that the punishment could not be abolished; he was aware likewise of the progress of a contrary opinion, not only amongst the public, but amongst officers themselves. He was aware, too, that there had been practically a mitigation of the punishment, and that it was not called into practice so frequently as formerly. Under these circumstances, he thought the time had come when the punishment might be abolished in England, though he doubted whether it would be safe to relieve soldiers serving abroad from the restraint. He knew a case of a soldier who bore an excellent character when sober, but when intoxicated always attacked his sergeant; he twice received 500 lashes for this offence, but it did him no good. Though he was aware of the little corrective power of this punishment, as a restraint upon soldiers abroad, he was afraid it could not yet be dispensed with in the colonies. As the hon. Member's Motion was confined to the United Kingdom, he should support it. It was of importance to raise the character of the English soldier, and that could be done by abolishing flogging at home.

Mr. *O'Connell* was happy that the weight of Government was not thrown into the scale against the clause of the hon. member for Middlesex. If, therefore, the practice of military flogging were to be continued—if torture were still to be allowed in the British army, it would not be the fault of Ministers, but of the Reformed Parliament. Officers were incompetent judges upon the subject, and their opinions ought therefore to have no influence on the decision of the House. He called upon the House to remember, that in our army alone the practice still prevailed, which still kept up that wide distance between the officer and the private which existed in no other body of troops. Among them there was a degree of familiarity, he might call it brotherhood, which making them mutually dependent on the good opinion of each other, preserved discipline without cruelty. The question was, whether not only British subjects, but the very natives of Britain, were to be legally put to the torture; and he was sorry to see that many who turned up the whites of their eyes, "till the strings of them (as Sir Pertinax said) were ready to crack" at the notion of flogging negroes, were not present on this occasion to give a vote in favour of their own countrymen. The House ought to interfere at once to put an end to the degrading practice; and when once flogging was abolished, a better class of men would be induced to enter the army, especially at the present moment, when labour was so cheap and abundant, that the reward of the labourer was reduced to the narrowest pittance. There was no flogging in the army of Napoleon, and its discipline was sufficiently good to ensure victory. As long as the prevailing distinction between officer and private was preserved, and the passage—

> That in the General's but a choleric word,
> Which in the soldier is flat blasphemy—

remained proverbial, they would get only the worst class of men to enter the army. Remove that distinction a better class would enter the service, and discipline be more easily maintained. He called upon the Reformed House of Commons to back the hon. Member in his attempt to remove this disgraceful cruelty from England. What, he would ask, had the Reformed House yet done for the cause of humanity? He well knew how much it had done in opposition to that cause; but he hoped that this night the Members would be able to retire to their beds after having given a vote which would satisfy their consciences, and make some little compensation for the injury they had done to Ireland.

Lord *Althorp* had been surprised to hear the hon. member for Middlesex read his name as one of those who had formerly voted for the abolition of corporal punishment in the army. He had thought that he had never given a vote against its continuance, although he certainly had never voted in its favour. He had formerly been of opinion, and he retained that opinion still, that the weight of military authority was so great, that it would not be safe entirely to abolish flogging in the army. True, it was a punishment at which the feelings of human nature revolted, but he felt, that he should take upon himself an unjustifiable degree of responsibility if he voted in opposition to the judgment of those who had the greatest experience. Officers were still men, and they possessed the ordinary sympathies of men, and while they possessed them, they were competent to decide on the fitness or unfitness of adhering to the old practice. The clause of the hon. member for Middlesex only applied to Great Britain; flogging was still to be allowed beyond the limits of the empire, and that circumstance would materially and inconveniently increase the repugnance of the soldiers to go upon foreign service. If any process could be suggested, by which the punishment could be safely removed, he was ready to give it his consideration; but, under present circumstances, however painful it was to him to vote against the proposition of the hon. member for

Middlesex, he felt that it would be quite inconsistent with his duty if he did not do his best to oppose it.

Captain *Curteis* called the attention of the House to the warrant recently issued decreasing the pensions of soldiers—which he said, would tend still further to lower the character of the army, and increase the necessity for inflicting corporal punishment. He was aware that many recruits were enlisted in a state of drunkenness, and cared little for any consequences, but that was not the case with the inhabitants of Scotland who supplied our army with many soldiers. If more than half the pension hitherto allowed to the soldier, after a certain period of service, were taken away, it would be impossible—for the future—to obtain any recruits, except from the prisons and workhouses. Already the army had become too common a refuge for the abandoned, for whenever a man of notoriously bad character was brought before a Magistrate at the Quarter Sessions, he invariably recommended him to enlist. If the order to which he had alluded were not rescinded, the army would soon consist entirely of such characters. Would they be a fit class of persons upon whom to try a new system for the enforcement of discipline? Imprisonment had been recommended as a substitute for flogging; but he had no hesitation in saying, that to confine a soldier in a public prison, and compel him to become the associate of men convicted of every crime, was the very worst species of punishment that could possibly be adopted. To imprison soldiers in common gaols would be to make them worse when they came out than when they went in; but he would support a motion for the erection of prisons in barracks, which he thought might be made to supply the place of flogging.

Sir *Rufane Donkin* referred to an experiment he had made in the regiment of which he was Lieutenant Colonel, to abolish corporal punishment, which experiment had failed, for the men began with knocking down the corporals, went on to the serjeants, and finally threatened the officer on guard. He must, however, say, that when he commanded a brigade in Spain, he had made an appeal to the men on the subject, and for fourteen months no instance of flogging had occurred. It would be a satisfaction to the hon. and learned member for Dublin to be informed, that the two regiments he had then under his orders were not only Irish, but Irish *par excellence* in every sense of the word. One was the Prince of Wales's Royal Irish, and the other the Connaught Rangers, commonly called the Rollickers. The fact was, that the officers had identified themselves with the men—they had slept under the same trees, and endured the same hardships, so that a feeling of affection grew up, which was the best source of obedience. There were only two ways of preserving discipline in the army; one was, to appeal to the moral feelings of the soldiers, which of course would be by far the best way, if it could be found to answer; but if it did not answer, then the only other method was to have recourse to physical suffering. He was confident, that the British army, at least in foreign service, could not be kept together without the House left to the officers the power of inflicting corporal punishment; though God forbid that such punishment should be often had recourse to, as indeed it was not.

Mr. *Curteis* could not let the House go into Committee on this Bill without recording on that occasion, as he should on every other, his utter abhorrence of this system of punishment. There might be found several substitutes for it. For instance, it was found, that the most furious animals were tamed by a course of starvation. He should most strenuously support the abolition of military flogging though he agreed in the propriety of limiting the abolition in the first instance to the United Kingdom.

Major *Handley* would also strongly support the abolition of military flogging as regarded troops at home; he did not think there would be any difficulty in finding an effective substitute for this mode of punishment. But, with respect to the army in service abroad, he must say, that he thought summary punishment, from the nature of their position, could not be dispensed with. They could not on a march very well have recourse to imprisonment, or to the very extraordinary mode of punishment suggested by the hon. Member who spoke last. Therefore, while he strongly advocated the abolition of this punishment with respect to the army at home, he should object to its remission with respect to troops on foreign service. He only asked for the power to continue it; he was fully convinced, that too good a feeling existed among officers to put it into effect very often. Under the Emperor Napoleon the French army had been kept in the finest discipline, yet corporal punishment was seldom or ever heard of. The fact was, the point of honour had been kept up to a very high degree in the French army. For himself, he had witnessed in the Ionian Isles the best possible effects result from the substitution of solitary confinement in lieu of corporal punishment.

An *Hon. Member* most strongly objected to the extraordinary and unfair distinction which was proposed to be made between troops in foreign service and troops at home. He thought all soldiers were alike entitled to the same treatment. A great deal had been said, and he did not object to it, with respect to the fine discipline preserved in the French army without the influence of corporal punishment; but hon. Gentlemen must also bear in mind that punishments were frequently carried into effect in that army—such as shooting, and obliging deserters to carry heavy irons—which if attempted to be introduced here would meet with as much opposition and excite as strong feelings of horror and dislike as the punishment which the hon. member for Middlesex had moved to abolish.

Mr. *Sheil* advocated the abolition of this dreadful and demoralizing punishment. Some gallant Officers had opposed the abolition; but he did not think that officers of the army were the most competent judges in this matter. No, certainly not. He would not go to a clergyman for his opinion as to Reform in the Church; nor to the West-India planter on the subject of negro emancipation; nor to one of his own profession for an opinion about reforming the lucrative abuses of the law. No more, then, would he be led in his opinion of the propriety of reforming the punishment of the army, by what an officer in the army might say. As to the substitution of punishment, there had been different ones proposed; one hon. Member, who he supposed was a member of the very valuable Zoological Society, seemed to recommend the practice of the Zoological Gardens for the army. He did not agree with that hon. Member in taking a zoological view of the case. The present system was a most degrading and demoralizing one; the British soldiery might be dealt with in the same spirit with the Roman soldiers:—

Facinus est civem Romanum verberari.

Colonel *Gore Langton* said, that if it were wished to preserve a disciplined and effective army, they must retain the power of inflicting corporal punishment. He was strongly averse to inflicting it when it could be avoided, but the power of inflicting it ought to be maintained.

Sir *John Byng* stated, that he had formerly agreed with the hon. member for Middlesex as to the expediency of abolishing the punishment of flogging in the army; and he had accordingly been induced to make the experiment of abstaining altogether from the use of corporal punishment with respect to the soldiers under his command, for a period of two years; but it did not succeed. At the expiration of the time the regiment was in a much worse state of discipline than before. He had, therefore, after this experiment, and much consideration upon the subject, been led to the conclusion, that to do away altogether with the power of inflicting corporal punishment would vitally affect the discipline of the British army. It had been repeatedly urged, that a substitute might be found equally efficient with the punishment now in use. But what was it to be? He had for a long time turned his attention anxiously to the subject, but he had never yet been able to devise an adequate substitute. He did not mean to contend, that corporal punishment was frequently to be resorted to, but he maintained that the power of inflicting it should be continued to commanding officers; and in so saying, he well knew he was speaking the sentiments of the General Commanding-in-chief; and if the power were continued, as he recommended, the House would have no reason to apprehend that it would be abused, for the practice of flogging in the army was decreasing from year to year. To the Amendment of the hon. Member he was decidedly opposed. He thought no difference should be made between the soldier at home and abroad. The distinction proposed would be most invidious; in his opinion, it would be much better to abolish the system of corporal punishment altogether, than agree to the Amendment of the hon. member for Middlesex.

Sir *Francis Burdett* stated, that he felt great difficulty in addressing the House upon the subject before them at that moment, because he was in some sort taken unawares; but the great difficulty he experienced, proceeded, on the one hand, from his apprehension lest, not having had due time for consideration, he should be led away by the strength of his feelings; and, on the other, from the impossibility of his being able to suffer a question such as the present to pass over in silence, although he thought a much more convenient and better opportunity might have been hereafter found for bringing the Motion forward. He would not, however, hesitate to repeat what he had before repeatedly said, that, in his opinion, the practice of flogging in the army was atrocious — was intolerable. He deeply regretted that the Government, to which he had made every kind of application to take up the matter themselves, had not complied with his entreaty—had not made some commencement, which might serve to assure the people that a subject which excited the strongest public feeling, and which, at the same time, required deep thought, would be placed by them in a fair way of being ultimately brought to a satisfactory result. He repeated, that he regretted this exceedingly, for if Government did not do so, it would soon be out of their power to induce the English public longer to endure a practice of such revolting cruelty. The gallant General had contended that flogging was always the "*ultimum remedium*;" so it might be in some regiments, but the public were well aware that this was neither always nor generally the case; but, on the contrary, it was frequently inflicted for offences which did not justify its application. He admitted that he had little better authority for this assertion than the public prints; but they contained frequent instances in which corporal punishment was administered in cases where it was perfectly disgusting to imagine it could have been inflicted. Even if it were necessary that the power of flogging should be continued to commanding officers, let it at least be circumscribed. Let it be confined to such offences as mutiny and stealing from a comrade. If it were so strongly asserted that the possession of this power was absolutely necessary to the good government of the army, why he would consent to let it be retained, but then it must be circumscribed within well defined limits. When it was much worse than it is now—when it was almost a hundred-fold worse—there were officers found to defend the system as it then existed; and such was the effect of a bad system, that all men, even those of refined and enlightened minds, were hardened by the frequent exhibition of human suffering. A wise man had said, that men were fond of using force as their right hand, and reason as their left. He feared that the existence of this practice, and the constant defence of it by officers in the army, afforded a great proof of the soundness of that remark. But their objections to its abolition were answered by one important fact; namely, that though the practice had so much diminished as to be, when compared to what it was thirty years ago, almost as it were abolished, still the character, conduct, and discipline of the army had been materially improved. If, then, the power of inflicting this punishment was to be retained, let it be retained within well defined limits. Let mutiny, fairly understood, be punished in this manner; but, as the matter stood now, there was one clause in the Mutiny Bill which, by the introduction of the word "insubordination," would justify any petty officer in inflicting the punishment for any supposed affront [*No, no*]. Let those Gentlemen who cried no, show that he was mistaken, and he should be most happy to hear the proof that convicted him of his error. It was said, that in foreign armies men were shot for offences; he was almost ready to say, shoot men rather than keep up this punishment of the lash, for none could be shot but upon full investigation and solemn sentence; and it was better that one man should be shot, than that the whole army should be disgraced. In many regiments corporal punishment had not been employed for years. One instance of this, and he mentioned it to the honour of the Duke of Gloster, was in that regiment of Coldstream Guards, of which that illustrious Duke was the Commander. In that case, the attention of the officers to the men was extreme, and the men were thus retained in obedience by affection rather than fear. Some years ago the infliction of 1,000 lashes was thought no extraordinary punishment; 1,500 had sometimes been ordered in a sentence, and a man was brought out three or four, or five times to receive his sentence. If the number was considerable, he was brought out so often that he might almost be said to live under the lash. These were things past and gone; and he had no doubt, that if the matter was fairly considered, not these enormities alone, but the whole system might be abolished without the least danger to the good conduct and discipline of the army. The practice of flogging ought not to be kept up for the purpose of continuing in the army men who ought to be turned out of it. They had better be turned out of the army. The Motion of the hon. member for Middlesex was for the abolition of this system in England, and surely the experiment might be tried to that extent. He had the authority of officers for saying this, for when he himself had brought forward motions on this subject to abolish the system altogether, they had said that it could not be wholly done away with, but that it might be abolished in England, though it could not be abolished with regard to troops in foreign service. Lord Hutchinson had expressed his opinion that discipline could be kept up without it, and with his feelings and with that authority, he could not but vote in favour of the Motion. He was confident, that if his hon. friend had continued in the office connected with the army, the clauses of the Mutiny Act would have been framed with a view to abolish the punishment of flogging, and at the same time, to substitute something that should have secured the safety of the public and the discipline of the army. If there was a difference of opinion on the facts, he thought that a Committee ought to be appointed to inquire into them, and to lay the Report before the House.

Viscount *Palmerston* observed, that he felt all the disadvantage which he had in rising after the hon. Baronet, who always expressed himself with a talent and a fervour which were sure to command a willing audience. On that occasion, too, he had the advantage of speaking on a subject which had for many years engaged the energies of his heart and mind. The hon. Baronet spoke in unison with the best feelings of human nature, and if the House were disposed to consult only such feelings, there could be no doubt as to the conclusion at which they would arrive; and not only would they agree to the motion of the hon. member for Middlesex, but they would be eager to abolish all punishment of whatever description. But this was a question not to be disposed of on feeling and sentiment alone, for it involved grave considerations of public interest and the safety of the community, as well as the comfort of the soldier, and must be decided by a calm and deliberate examination of all the circumstances of the case. There was no man who would venture to contend that a large army could be governed unless the officers possessed the power of inflicting upon the men composing it severe punishment. None had ever been governed without such a power. But then hon. Gentlemen said, that they had special objection to this particular punishment. He did not stand there as the advocate for corporal punishment, nor to say that it was good in itself; for he could not but admit that its tendency was in some degree to degrade the minds of the men even more than the infliction injured their body. If any substitute, therefore, could be provided for it, he should be glad to see it abolished. Hon. Gentlemen, however, who objected to this punishment, did not suggest any substitute for it, but paid the Government the compliment of relying on their wisdom to find a substitute. He would rather they should have undertaken the duty than paid that compliment, particularly when the Government said it knew of no substitute for this punishment which would answer the purpose equally well. He could not believe, on a subject of such great importance as the discipline of the army, which, be it remembered, did not merely concern the interests of the army, but those of the whole community with which it came into contact, and whose rights and security were at stake—he could not believe, that on a subject of such importance, Members would allow themselves to be run away with by their feelings, or would negative the necessity of this discipline, without seeing their way to some adequate substitute. What were the substitutes which had been proposed? One hon. Gentleman said, that solitary imprisonment would be productive of good results, and an instance was given of a case which occurred in one of the Ionian islands, where the solitary imprisonment of one man produced a most beneficial effect on the whole garrison. But how was it possible, with a large army scattered over an immense tract of country, always to have at hand the means of solitary confinement? When he was Secretary-at-War, on examining on one occasion, the returns of the punishments at the Guards, he found that sixteen men duce, was connected with the appointment of the Masters in Chancery. It was proposed that they should be no longer appointed by the Lord Chancellor at his will and pleasure, but by the Crown. He admitted, that in making such appointments, the Crown ought to be advised by the Great Seal; but it appeared to him to be more fitting that individuals exercising high judicial functions, as the Masters in Chancery did, should be appointed by the Crown, than by any public functionary, no matter how high his office, rank, and dignity. There was this substantial difference between vesting the appointment in the Crown and vesting it in the Lord Chancellor, which must strike everybody at the first blush: it was possible, though it was not likely, that a person, having no control exercised over him either by the Crown or by his colleagues, might be disposed, from private favour and affection, to appoint to these offices persons unfit for them. The effect of the difference would be, that, though the patronage would still substantially be with the Lord Chancellor, the vesting it in the Crown would prevent him from proposing persons for these judicial functions who were unqualified to perform them, and would prevent any person from being wantonly rejected who ought to be proposed. That was an omission of which he had been unintentionally guilty on the former evening. He also begged to be excused for noticing another point. An idea had gone abroad from persons reading imperfectly, or rather from their not reading at all, the existing Bankrupt Act, that the patronage arising out of the appointment of Commissioners in the country was vested in the Great Seal. Hence, a number of applications had been made to him which were extremely distressing. He wished it therefore to be generally understood, that the Lord Chancellor had nothing more to do with the nomination of the country Commissioners than any of their Lordships who had never entered the Court of Chancery. The nomination of these officers was vested in the Judges of Assize, and in them alone. They were requested, on going their respective circuits, to make recommendation of fitting persons for those offices to the Great Seal, and the Lord Chancellor had no power to nominate any other persons than those the Judges recommended. At east, so long as he had the honour of holding the Great Seal, he would never interfere with the choice of those who alone had the power of making the recommendation.

Bill read a first time.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, April 3, 1833.

Minutes.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of Mr. Wilks, Returns from the Police Offices in Middlesex, Surrey, Westminster, the City of London, and the Borough of Southwark, from 1st January, 1832, to 1st January, 1833; of the Number of Persons committed from each Office for Felonies, Misdemeanors, &c.—On the Motion of Mr. Ruthven, the Sum paid to each Newspaper in Ireland, for the insertion of Government Proclamations, from the date of the last Return laid before the House.—On the Motion of Mr. Vigors, the Number of Persons committed to Carlow Gaol during the last six Months, with Copies or Extracts of Official Reports furnished to the Lord Lieutenant of the County of Carlow relative to Outrages committed within that County during the Months of January, February, and March, 1833.—On the Motion of Mr. Lennard, the Number of Persons on whom Sentence of Death was passed in the year 1832, and the Number who were Executed for Housebreaking.

Bill. Read a third time:—Mutiny.—Read a first time:—Parochial Rates; Dissenters Exemptions.

Petitions presented. By Colonel Baillie, from Inverness, for a Repeal of the Duty on Soap; and from Nairn, for the Abolition of Patronage in the Church of Scotland.—By Mr. Shaw, from Delgany, against the New System of Education (Ireland); from the Diocess of Ferns, and two other Places, against the Church of Ireland Bill; and from King's Lynn, for Protections to the Protestant Clergy in Ireland.—By the Earl of Lincoln, from Nottingham, in favour of a Factories Regulation Bill.—By the same, from Bridgenorth, and other Places; by Mr. Shaw, from Dublin, Drogheda, and other Places; by Mr. John Fort, from Clitheroe and Taney; by Mr. Plumptre, from Wingham; by Mr. Ewing, from Glasgow and Rye; by Mr. Wilks, from a Congregation in Jewin Crescent, London; Mr. E. Buller, Colonel Howard, Mr. Cutlar Fergusson, Sir Samuel Whalley, and an Hon. Member, from a great many Places,—for the Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By Mr. M'Leod, from Nairn, for Delaying the Progress of the Lord's Day Bill, to give time for considering its Provisions.—By Mr. Denison, Mr. M'Leod, and Mr. Lloyd Watkin, from Godalming, and other Places,—against Slavery.—By Mr. Maurice O'Connell, from Tralee and Kilgobbin; and by Mr. O'Connell, from a Number of Places,—against Tithes,—By Sir Samuel Whalley, Mr. Frederick North, and Mr. Clay, from several Places,—against the Assessed Taxes.—By Mr. O'Connell, Mr. R. Wallace, and Colonel Williams,—against the Disturbances (Ireland) Bill.—By Mr. O'Connell, from Numbers of Places in Ireland, for a Repeal of the Legislative Union.—By Mr. Ewing, from Glasgow; and Mr. Cutlar Fergusson, from Urr,—against the present System of Church Patronage in Scotland.—By Mr. Wilks, Mr. E. Buller, Colonel Williams, and Mr. R. Walker, from many Places, for Relief to the Dissenters.—By Mr. Ewing, from Glasgow, against the Imprisonment of Debtors for Small Sums; and for a Repeal of the Attornies' Tax.—By Colonel F. G. Howard, from Licensed Victuallers in Morpeth, for the Reduction of the Duty on Spirituous and Malt Liquor.—By Mr. O'Connell, from Dublin; and Mr. Throckmorton, from Marlborough,—for granting to the Inhabitants of Corporate Towns the Privilege of Electing their own Magistrates.—By Mr. O'Connell, from the National Trades Political Union of Dublin, for an Amendment of the Law respecting Juries in Ireland, and for the Amendment of the Reform of Parliament (Ireland) Bill.—By Mr. R. Wallace, from Markinch Political Union, for Vote by Ballot; and from

Greenock, for the Abolition of the China Monopoly.—By Colonel WILLIAMS, Earl JERMYN, and Messrs. PLUMPTRE, O'CONNELL, and WILLIAM PEEL, from many Places,—for a Factories Regulation Bill; and by Mr. J. E. STANLEY, from Hyde, and Staley Bridge; and Mr. EWING, from Bury,—for further Inquiry into the Factories.—By Lord CAVENDISH, from Bakewell and Eckington, for an Inquiry into the State of the Currency.—By Mr. PARROTT, from Totness, for the Abolition of the Statute Duty in the Repair of Turnpike Roads.—By Colonel LYGON, Lord CAVENDISH, Sir SAMUEL WHALLEY, Mr. F. NORTH, and Mr. J. H. LLOYD, from several Places,—for a Repeal of the Sale of Beer Act.—By Mr. JOHN FIELDEN, from Wingham, Kent, for a House of Commons more suitable to the dignity of the Assembly, and the importance of the Business transacted there: from Todmorden and Walsden, for a Repeal of the Stamp Duties on Newspapers; the Repeal of the Duties on Malt, Hops, and Soap; the Repeal of the Septennial Act, and the Adoption of the Ballot.

DISFRANCHISEMENT OF SAILORS.] Mr *Hutt* presented a petition, to which he would venture to call the particular attention of the House. The petition was signed by almost every sailor of the port of Hull, and complained of a very serious grievance which appeared to be put upon them by the thirty-second section of the Reform Bill—a grievance which was actually inflicted during the last election. The thirty-second section of the Reform Act required, that every burgess and householder shall be in residence for six months previous to the last day of July, in the borough for which he claims to vote. The sailors of Hull were very liable to be absent at this period, being engaged in their hard and honourable vocation. With respect to those sailors engaged in the Greenland fishery, as they depart from home during the month of March, and return generally during the month of October, if the interpretation which had been given by the revising Barrister who visited Hull were the true meaning of the Bill, they would be permanently disfranchised; but this surely never could be the intention of the Bill. It never could have been designed that this honest and meritorious class of the community should, without fault imputed, or mischief apprehended, be so rashly stripped of their political rights. He should put it to the Attorney General to say, whether this was the object of the thirty-second section? For, if so, he should feel it his duty to bring the subject before the House in a very different form. For his own part, he believed, that the revising Barrister had, in this instance, been betrayed into an error.

The *Attorney General* said, as there had been no judicial discussion upon the subject, he would not undertake to state positively his opinion; but his impression was, that the view taken by the revising Barrister was erroneous; the object of the clause was, to prevent voters from residing permanently at a place distant from where they claimed a vote, which would not apply to the sailors. Where they left their families, and where they paid their rates and taxes, was their real home.

Mr. *Wilks* considered, that the revising Barrister of this district had made a great mistake in his interpretation of the section of the Act. If the opinion of that learned gentleman was a sound one, some of the boldest and most able men in the kingdom would be excluded from the exercise of their undoubted rights. If there was any doubt whatever entertained about the clause, it ought to be instantly corrected.

The *Solicitor General* concurred entirely with what had fallen from his learned friend the Attorney General, that the petitioners were clearly residents within the meaning of the Reform Act. They had houses in the town—they were residents in the place—they paid taxes—and, in short, did every thing which entitled them to the enjoyment of the elective franchise. He felt no doubt in his own mind, that the revising Barrister had fallen into a mistake, which he sincerely hoped and trusted other revising Barristers would not follow.

Petition laid on the Table.

REFINING SUGAR.] Mr. *Clay* presented a petition from the persons connected with the sugar-refining trade, in the city of London, signed by every person in the trade, with one or two exceptions, and whose signatures represented a capital of between 2,000,000*l.* and 3,000,000*l.*, on the subject of the Sugar-duties. The petitioners stated their conviction that the trade in which they were engaged, was making a swift progress to absolute ruin, and that it was fast leaving this country, and being transferred to foreign nations, in consequence of the non-renewal of the Act which expired in 1830, for permitting foreign sugars to be refined in this country. The refiners were unable to give employment to the same number of hands they had formerly employed; and not only was their trade in a state of great suffering, but also a serious effect had been produced on the trades of paper-makers, coopers, and the many others connected indirectly with the sugar-refining business. Without pressing particularly on the Government, it would certainly be gratifying to the petitioners to know, whether there was any prospect of the prayer of their petition being granted.

That prayer was for the immediate introduction of a bill, to allow foreign sugars to be refined in bond, until some permanent arrangement could be completed. The alteration in the trade of the country, by opening the commerce of China, which had been confined hitherto to the port of London, to the whole community, would do the latter a serious injury; and he thought it afforded an additional reason for pressing upon the Government the importance of encouraging so important a branch of the trade of the metropolis as the sugar-refining trade.

Mr. *Ewart* had been requested to support the petition. The existing state of the law produced a serious effect, both on the imports and exports of the country, and was severely felt by the merchants of Liverpool and elsewhere. The noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had the other night said, that the best way of giving relief to the people was to afford them employment; and he (Mr. Ewart) was satisfied, no branch of manufactures afforded such an opportunity of giving employment as the sugar-refining trade. If the same restrictions had been applied to foreign cotton as now existed on sugars, where, he would ask, would have been the cotton trade of Lancashire? And how much less would have been the power and consideration of this country over the commerce of the world? This was really a national, and not merely a commercial question, and one of interest, not solely to the petitioners, but to the country at large.

Mr. *Morrison* concurred in what had fallen from his hon. friend, the member for the Tower Hamlets, and had no doubt, that, were it not for the difficulties which now prevailed, this country would be able to supply the world with refined sugars.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, the present was a melancholy example of the effects of bad laws. The trade in Ireland had been annihilated by bad laws, and care should be taken that a similar result did not arise in this country. Before the Union there were no less than eleven sugar-refineries in Dublin, while there was not one at the present moment.

Lord *Althorp* said, that he rose merely to say, that he had not been inattentive to the prayer of the petition, and not with any expectation of being able to state anything satisfactory to the hon. Gentlemen who had supported the petition. He was aware that, under the present regulations the refiners were only supplied with a sufficient quantity to employ them half the year, and this, he must admit, was certainly a situation in which the trade ought not to be.

Petition to lie on the Table.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE IN THE EARLY SITTING.] The *Speaker* was anxious, before the House proceeded to the public business of the day, to call its attention for a few moments to the result of the experiment which had been made in an early period of the Session, and which was continued to the present time, for the despatch of private business, and the presentation of petitions. The House was aware of the important alteration that had been made in its hours of sitting, and that, by that arrangement, the House had, on the days when election business did not interfere, sat from twelve to three. The object of this early sitting was to despatch private business, to receive returns made to orders of the House, and most especially to receive petitions. The House having set apart that time for these purposes, resolved to meet for the despatch of the public business of the day at 5 o'clock. One effect of this regulation had been, that it enabled them to proceed at once at 5 o'clock to the public business. So far the experiment had succeeded; but he need hardly say, that as far as related to the presenting petitions it had failed of producing the intended effect, and of meeting the convenience of the House. The proposition was, that the House, on its meeting at twelve each day, should begin where it had left off at three on the day preceding. This had made it necessary to have a book in which the names of Members having petitions to present were entered, and that book had not been long on the Table before it had the names of between 500 and 600 Members, who were to be called on in the order in which they stood. The result was, that no Member knew when his name might be called on, and thus many Members attended from day to day, without being able to present the petitions which had been committed to them. Thus, for example, no Gentleman who saw the books could anticipate what had actually taken place this day—that he should have gone through the whole book. Of course those whose names were far down in the book, not expecting that their names would have been called, were not in attendance, and the result was, that an erroneous impression might go forth—that hon. Members to whose care petitions had been confided were inattentive to their duty in not having appeared when they were called on. But this would be a most unjust inference, for no Gentleman could suppose that a list of 150 names, which had stood before his own, would have been gone through. To prevent a recurrence of this inconvenience he would suggest to the House, that, continuing the early sittings as heretofore, they should, after the Easter recess, go through, at each early sitting, the paper of that day, and that only. This would lead to a certainty of each Member presenting his petitions on the day for which they were fixed. Thus there would be a new paper to be gone through each day. By the practice of the House hitherto, when a daily list was made out, it was open for the insertion of Members' names at ten o'clock in the morning. Now, this gave a decided, and he would say an unfair, advantage, to those Gentlemen who happened to reside near the House. He would suggest that, to equalize the advantage to all Members, the daily list should be opened at eleven o'clock instead of ten ; and he had no doubt that the entry of one hour would afford sufficient business for the early sitting of that day. His object was, to render the plan which they had adopted more effectual, and with the changes which he had ventured to propose, he hoped that it would answer the purpose of getting through the early business with convenience to the House.

Mr. *Littleton* said, that though circumstances had occurred to render the experiment which the House had tried not as successful as could have been wished, yet it had undoubtedly enabled the House to get through a greater share of business, particularly in the presentation of petitions. He had opportunities of knowing (as one of the Committee on petitions) the number of petitions presented; and he found that up to the 2nd of April last year, when no election ballots had interfered, the number of petitions presented was 926; but that, by the arrangement made by the right hon. Gentleman, for which the House and the country were so much indebted to him, the number of petitions received by the House up to the same date during the present Session was 2,457. He would make only one suggestion on what had been proposed by the right hon. Gentleman, and in the propriety of which they must all concur. He would venture to suggest that the hour for opening the daily list for entering the names of Members who had petitions to present should be at half past eleven each day. This would afford sufficient time for the entry of names for the presentation of petitions enough to occupy the early sitting.

The *Speaker* said, that whatever time would best meet the convenience of the House would answer the object he had in view, in naming a later hour than usual, which was to give equal advantage to those who resided at a distance and to those who were near the House. If half an hour should be found sufficient to fill the daily list, it would be so much the better, for the shortest time in which it could be done would be best and fairest for all.

Mr. *Trevor* suggested, that no petition should be received on any day which was not in the list of that day. It was not fair, at the close of a fatiguing day's business to ask the Speaker to sit for an hour or more to receive petitions, which, if time did not admit in the early sitting, should be entered on the list of the next day.

The *Speaker* said, that there were occasions when a departure from the general rule in this respect would be not only justifiable but necessary; for instance, in the case of a bill in progress through the House, to which objections existed on the part of many individuals, if time had not permitted in the early sitting, up to 3 o'clock, for receiving all petitions against it, it would be but fair that an opportunity should be given for receiving such petitions at the close of the evening sitting. Having said this, he would state, further, his obligations to Gentlemen who had offered petitions at the close of the sitting, that none had been offered without his having been previously consulted by the Gentlemen to whom they had been confided, as to whether it would be convenient to him to sit and receive them, and that nine-tenths of such petitions related to business afloat in the House. He therefore felt it his duty to express to the House generally, and to every hon. Member individually, his great obligations for their attention on all occasions to his personal convenience.

Mr. *Spring Rice* concurred in the suggestion of his hon. friend, the member for Staffordshire, that half past eleven o'clock would be quite time enough to open the list of the day for the insertion of the names of Members who had petitions to present that day. As the right hon. Gentleman in the Chair had not repined on account of the additional labour thus heaped on him by the new regulations, the House should take care that it was not pressed to too great an extent. The House would bear him out in the statement, that no right hon. Gentleman who had ever filled that Chair had ever burthened himself with so large a share of business.

BOROUGH OF HERTFORD.] Mr. *Bernal*, pursuant to the notice he gave yesterday, rose to move, that the issuing of the Speaker's warrant to the Clerk of the Crown for making out a new writ for the election of two burgesses for the Borough of Hertford, in the room of Lords Ingestrie and Mahon, whose election was declared void, be suspended; but before he put his Motion into the Speaker's hands, he would move that the Special Report of the Hertford Election Committee be read.

The Report was then read—"That it appears to the Committee that bribery and treating prevailed previously to, and during, the last election for the borough of Hertford."

Mr. *Bernal* said, he would not enter into any argument on the question, but would found his Motion on the precedent established in the case of the borough of Liverpool, in which, when a similar Special Report was made, the House had suspended the issuing of the Speaker's warrant. The hon. Member moved, that the issuing of the Speaker's warrant be suspended till the 22nd of April.—Ordered.

FACTORIES' COMMISSION.] Mr. *Wilson Patten* presented three Petitions from the Cotton Manufacturers of Preston, Blackburn, and Rochdale, praying for a Commission to inquire into the subject of labour in factories. He would then submit to the House the Motion of which he had given notice, for the appointing a Commission to obtain further information on the subject of the Factories' Bill before that Bill itself were brought forward. He had had doubts, whether he should bring the subject forward this evening, the Vice-President of the Board of Trade being absent; but by the advice of several competent and anxious Members, he should, notwithstanding the absence of that hon. Gentleman, proceed with his Motion; and then he should have the satisfaction of having done his duty. His only object in the Motion was, to do an act of justice. He regretted he had not been able to bring it forward at an earlier period of the Session, as he had intended; the inquiry then would have proceeded so far by this time, that on the House commencing its sittings after the holidays, the Bill of the noble Lord (Ashley) could have been immediately brought forward. Circumstances, however, over which he had no control, had prevented him. He said thus much to excuse himself from that charge of wishing to delay the Bill which had been made against him by several Members, and by the public Press. He considered further inquiry to be of the most material importance, so much so, that an efficient Bill could not be framed without it. He had reason to believe, that there would still be plenty of time for this, and to pass the Bill before the end of this Session. He wished, as he had said, to do an act of justice to a large body of men who had been seriously accused, and as he believed most unjustly, but who had hitherto had no opportunity of freeing themselves from the charges brought against them. He also wished to guard hon. Members against the strong feeling of humanity in favour of one side, which must have been produced in their minds by the evidence already laid before the Committee—evidence which those whom it was directed against had not had an opportunity of contradicting up to the present time. That evidence was very voluminous; it was also of a strong and decisive nature. He would say, that if he thought that that evidence gave a true description of what was done in the manufacturing districts—if he believed that what had been asserted was matter of fact, he would go much further than the noble Lord—he would declare that the Bill of the noble Lord was not strong enough. But the evidence on both sides had not been heard, and to procure that was the object of his Motion. He trusted that they would not allow themselves to be hurried away by those feelings of humanity which were so praiseworthy; and for himself, he did not believe that all the statements made before the Committee were true, though certain portions might be so; but, taken as a whole, they were far from giving a correct view of the state of the manufacturing districts. A correct view could only be obtained by further inquiry; but even were the statements which had been made in all respects correct, he believed that better methods could be found of putting an end to the abuses than those proposed in the noble Lord's Bill. The late Parliament had declined to legislate on the subject, because they were not provided with sufficient information as to the existing state of that great manufacture for which they were called upon to legislate, and they had, in consequence, referred the matter to a Select Committee above-stairs; but he thought that the present Parliament was as ill provided with proper information on the subject as before the appointment of a Select Committee. In fact they were much worse off as to information than they were before; because the Committee inquired merely into one branch of the subject, and that branch too, on which there was the least diversity of opinion. The inquiry was so limited also, that the result tended rather to mislead the House than to enlighten it. When the Committee was appointed, it was suggested that all the points connected with the factory system should be taken into consideration; but an influential member of the Committee said, "You had better let me make out my case before other evidence is gone into," and, notwithstanding the opposition of several members of the Committee, in this partial manner were their proceedings conducted. In consequence, witnesses were summoned from the country to appear before the Committee, but the persons to whom the selection of witnesses was intrusted were strictly cautioned not to send up any person on whom they could not rely; that is, as he had good reason to believe, not to send up any persons who would let out anything unfavourable to the views of the Chairman of the Committee. He spoke in the hearing of several Gentlemen who were members of the Committee and who could, consequently, contradict his statement if he were not correct. The witnesses thus called by the Chairman were not less than eighty, and the time occupied in establishing his case satisfactorily was the remainder of the Session. It might be supposed that the examination of these eighty witnesses would have given full evidence with respect to the state of every district of the country—every branch of trade—all the evils, and all the most eligible remedies but no such thing had resulted. Among these witnesses there were twenty-one medical men, but out of them fifteen resided in London, and had had little or no practical experience upon the subject, of which they gave an abstract opinion. There was no information regarding the manufacturers of the West of England—the centre of England, and very little indeed with regard to Scotland. To make up for this, however, there were fifty-one witnesses from Leeds and its neighbourhood. He could produce evidence of the incorrectness and even falsehood of great part of the evidence which had been given, but he would merely state one fact, to show the reliance the House ought to place on that evidence. For this purpose he would select the witness whose evidence had made the greatest impression upon the public, not only by the statement he made of his unfortunate case, and sufferings from the factory work, but from the shocking deformity of his person. This man solemnly assured the Committee, that in his youth he had been as well formed and upright as any one of them, but that, in consequence of the dreadful and peculiar labour he had been obliged to undergo in factories, he had gradually become the crooked object they saw; that the pains he had throughout suffered were dreadful, and that he had been ultimately compelled to leave off working altogether. This was the case made out by the man himself, but he was ready to prove, from incontrovertible evidence, that the deformity of this man had nothing to do with his work in the factories but was the result of injuries received by him in a wrestling match. There were several other instances of a similar nature. The Committee, too, when any evidence was offered which might turn out unfavourable to their views, would never take any proper notice of it. There was a person who had been sent up to London; this witness could be brought up in a few hours to prove what he (Mr. W. Patten) now said, if necessary. When this witness came up to town, one of the Committee waited on her—heard her statements—examined her, and cross-examined her, but finding that what she said, was adverse to their views, he told her that there were fifty witnesses whose evidence was opposed to hers, and so she might go back into the country. Her name was Elizabeth Rushleigh. If such a thing as this had happened in a matter before a Court of Justice, a new trial would most certainly have been granted. He did not, however, ask for a new trial, nor for fresh inquiries; all he wanted was, a continuation of that inquiry; for the House was still as much in want of the information for which a Select Committee had been appointed as ever. He thought that a Bill brought in without having its provisions founded upon the most clear and impartial evidence would tend to crush and fetter the principal branches of our manufactures. He thought that the system of relays of children could be made available. He again advocated further inquiry; for if the evidence now before the House remained unimpeached, the House would, of course, not put any faith in the sincerity of the Members who opposed the Bill. Every means had been taken to raise the feelings of the people, both in and out of the House against the master manufacturers. He would give one instance of an attempt of this sort, which was in a Lancashire paper, purporting to be a report of a speech delivered by one of the hon. Members of that House, but which he fully believed had never been delivered, or at any rate in the terms so reported. It gave a very highly coloured statement of the sufferings of those who laboured in factories, particularly dwelling upon the miseries endured by children; and, for the purpose of illustration, the speaker was made to give an account to the following effect: that a poor little girl, for committing some trifling fault or error had been laid hold of by one of the masters, dreadfully beaten, and ill-used; that the master had hold of the child's head, and that in the struggle such violence was used by the master, that he pulled the child's scalp entirely off! Here was a story! Yet this was the illustration said to be made use of by the hon. speaker. He (Mr. W. Patten) trusted that the House would adopt it as a striking illustration of the sort of thing of which he complained. He would also call the attention of the House to the fact related in some papers presented by the hon. member for Middlesex, from which it appeared that no Committee, though there had been some most expensive Committees, had been so expensive as this Committee on the Factories Bill. It there appeared that not a single witness, rich or poor, old or young, had been called before this Committee but had received nine shillings a-day in addition to his expenses up and down. He believed, however, that a great deal of the money which had been so lavishly expended was appropriated to the smuggling a number of persons out of London, in order that they might not give evidence. Under such circumstances, he must say, that further inquiries were necessary; though, if there were any other way of obtaining his object than by a Commission, he should readily adopt it. At all events he hoped that the House would not proceed to legislate without first having sufficient information, so that they might produce no hasty and crude work. It had been said that he wanted to dupe the Legislature, and that he was himself the dupe of the masters. Neither was true. He only wanted to do justice to the masters; and the men would find that he had as strong a disposition to do justice to them as to the masters. He had no doubt, even, that he was as firm a friend to the factory children themselves as his noble friend. The question was, not whether they should consent to an Act for the abridgment of the labour of children—to that they were all agreed; but the question was, whether they should or should not do that in the best manner? The question was, whether they should not obtain correct information before proceeding to legislate, lest, in their wish to do good to some, they might do harm to others? The hon. Member concluded by moving "That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, praying that he will be graciously pleased to appoint a Commission to collect information in the manufacturing districts with respect to the employment of children in factories, and to devise the best means for the curtailment of their labours."

Lord *Molyneux* seconded the Motion from feelings of justice, and from motives of sound policy and humanity. He was not a member of the Committee, but he had seen much of the evidence given before it, and he did not believe that there was one atom of truth in the imputations which had been thrown out against the cotton manufacturers. He had seen the large mills of the hon. members for Nottinghamshire, Rochdale, and Manchester; and he was sure that the representations given before the Committee could not apply to them. He hoped, therefore, that the House would not, by acting on a false notion of humanity, proceed to pass an Act which would reduce the profits of the manufacturers one sixth. He was sure, if they passed such an Act, while the manufacturers had to struggle against the Corn Laws, and against the tax on raw cotton, that they would bring about the most disastrous consequences. Members were, perhaps, not aware of the nature of the evidence taken before the Committee, and that it was all collected from one quarter. The persons employed in the wool, the flax, and the silk mills were alone examined, and no information had been acquired of the present state of the cotton districts. There were already several Acts on this subject, and he hoped to see those Acts enforced before they made new laws. It would only be just to grant the Commission, and inquire into the condition of the people working in cotton and other factories in relation to the other labouring classes before they passed any such measure.

Lord *Ashley* must oppose the Motion. The Commission was not necessary, and if it were necessary, a Commission could not elicit that evidence which was desired by the House. He would not then enter into a discussion of the Bill, and he hoped other hon. Members would not, as he should be unable to reply to them. The subject into which it was now proposed to have a Commission to inquire was not unknown, it having been for forty years under discussion. He would give a brief outline of the proceedings which had taken place. In 1796, Drs. Aikin and Perceval, two very eminent medical men, had dwelt strongly on the evils of the factory system, and called the public attention to them. In 1802, the late Sir Robert Peel brought in his Bill to put a restraint on the hours of labour in cotton mills. If hon. Members would look at the provisions of that measure, they would find that its enactments were much the same as those he had drawn up. In 1816, Sir Robert Peel obtained a Committee of that House to inquire into the subject, and a large volume of evidence was printed. In consequence of the inquiries of that Committee, he brought in another Bill, which passed through that House, and was sent up to the Lords. There were two Committees appointed in 1818 and 1819, and two folio volumes of evidence were the result of those inquiries. The Bill, as it was agreed to by the Lords, was different from the Bill which Sir Robert Peel had brought in. He had extended it to all factories—the Bill which was passed was limited to cotton factories only. His Bill restricted the hours of labour to ten—that Bill extended them to twelve. The strongest clauses and penalties he had put in were struck out. In 1825, Sir John Hobhouse introduced his Bill, but it suffered great delay. It was moved in 1825, and the Bill did not pass till the month of October, 1830. Mr. Sadler brought his measure forward in March, 1832, which was referred to a Select Committee, and in August the Bill was stifled. Now that he had brought in a Bill, a Motion was made to appoint a Commission of Inquiry. The public attention, since it had first been directed towards this subject, had never been long turned away. In 1818, the masters had been heard in their defence. When the Bill went up to the Lords, they petitioned to be heard by Counsel, and be examined upon oath; and he would quote the evidence, to show how imperfect a case they had then made out. The masters had called a considerable number of medical men; but not one of them could bring forward one fact, or give one scientific or physiological reason to justify the long hours of labour. They always gave indirect or evasive answers to the questions that were asked. The noble Lord quoted at considerable length the evidence given by the medical gentlemen who were examined before the Lords' Committee in 1818 and 1819 in favour of the masters, to show that they had made out no justification whatever for the practices of the masters. He was not a member of the Committee of last Session; but he did not build his case upon the inquiries of any Committee. He was struck with the whole system. It was time it should be checked; and he would push the Bill as long as he breathed. He had heard statements against the evidence of the operatives, and he had heard these statements refuted; but as he did not mean to avail himself of the operatives evidence, neither should he bring forward the refutation of the assertions by which that evidence had been assailed. The whole matter had long ago been made to him quite clear, by the evidence of at least twenty medical men, who were as eminent as any men in their profession. The last Committee he considered to be entirely a work of supererogation. There was evidence enough on their shelves before that Committee sat, to convince every reasonable man that a more strong law than was already in existence must be passed. The evidence of the Committees of 1818 and 1819, coincided with the evidence of last year. There was a great number of medical men examined before those Committees, who agreed that ten hours were quite as much as ought to be allowed. Nine-tenths of that evidence related to cotton manufactories; and it could not, therefore, be said that they had not been inquired into. He might be asked, for what reason he had selected ten hours' labour as the maximum? The reason was, because he feared that he could not reduce the hours of labour to nine if he tried. The noble Lord here quoted the evidence given by Drs. Baillie and Blundell, and other medical witnesses, before the Committee in 1819, in favour of a measure similar to that which he (Lord

Ashley) had proposed. In 1819 there were eleven medical men who had had experience in the cotton districts examined upon oath before the Committee, and their testimony was in favour of such a measure. The petition to the House of Commons on the subject in 1818 was signed by six physicians and seventeen surgeons, all of whom had had great experience in those districts. Before the Committee of the House of Commons in 1832 Dr. Roget, who had been physician to the Manchester Infirmary, and two other eminent physicians of local experience in the cotton districts, were examined, and their evidence went to the same effect. The requisition for calling the meeting in Manchester in favour of the Bill which he (Lord Ashley) had had the honour of introducing, was signed by five physicians and sixteen surgeons there. Altogether he could appeal to the testimony of not less than ninety medical men connected with the cotton districts in favour of some such measure; and was it possible, under such circumstances, to assert that the House was not put in possession of sufficient local medical evidence upon the subject? The noble Lord quoted the evidence given by some of these medical gentlemen, to show that it was proved in 1818 that the cotton-factory children were injured in their health—stinted in their growth—and distorted in their limbs, by the unwholesome air and excessive labour of the cotton-mills. Having referred to the evidence of 1818, he proceeded to call their attention to the evidence of 1832, from which the noble Lord read several extracts. He also referred to some statements made in one of the cleverest tracts he had ever read, written by Dr. Kay, of Manchester. He referred to the evidence of this gentleman with greater readiness because he had declared himself an enemy to the Bill. He also read some extracts from a pamphlet written by one of the great master spinners, in favour of the Bill. The author was Mr. William Greig, of the firm of Samuel Greig and Co. at Bury, in Lancashire. Having gone through the evidence relative to cotton factories, he then proceeded to read portions of the evidence relative to the worsted and flax mills, and other departments of manufacture. The evidence given by Mr. Thackeray was most satisfactory on this subject. As to the silk mills, when he told the House that the children employed there were almost exclusively females—subject to all those dreadful evils which pressed so particularly on that sex in consequence of this system—he was sure he had said quite sufficient to convince the House that ten hours' labour was more than enough for young females. The evidence of the medical men who had been examined against this Bill was very unsatisfactory. The replies were, generally speaking, of the most evasive character, or else betrayed gross ignorance of the facts. The noble Lord also quoted the opinions of Dr. Blundell, and many of the most eminent medical men in London, who reprobated the present system as productive of the most alarming consequences. The manufacturers who were now asking for a commission to take evidence, had already had full opportunities of presenting their evidence. They had what in reality was —though not legally dignified with the name—a Commission. A committee of the master-manufacturers had engaged several medical men to visit all the factories, and report on the state of the children, and their evidence was afterwards taken before the Committee of the House of Lords. Of the carefulness of their examination, and the value of their testimony, some judgment might be formed from the following statement of one of these medical men. In reply to a question of the number of patients he had examined, and the time such examination occupied, he answered 1,170, and in nine hours. Several operatives who were suffering under the effects of distortion, and various complaints, were subsequently examined before the Lords' Committee, and they proved that they were sent out of the way from the factories to which they belonged when the medical commissioners came there to institute their examination. In consequence of such imperfect visitation, however, reports were made. The supporters of the Bill made out their case before the committee—the masters their's—and a rejoinder followed. He could not, therefore, conceive the necessity of a commission to inquire into further evidence. In the evidence which had been given they had not acted fairly, for it turned out that in many cases which the examining physicians had returned as healthy, the poor children were labouring under distortion and various other afflictions. Two gentlemen connected with the manufacturing districts had lately published pamphlets on this subject. He had read their books with great attention; one of them was addressed to himself; but, it was very imperfect. It was singular, that, from the beginning to the end of the pamphlet, Mr. Kirkman Finlay, the author, made no allusion to the evidence in 1832. He could not conceive how Mr. Finlay could be induced to set that evidence aside, unless it was, that he found it too much. He stated that the cotton system had proved to be healthy, and that twelve hours' labour had not been found too much. If there had been any thing weak in the evidence, Mr. Kirkman Finlay would have been able to refute it; but he said, that he never read it till he read the statement in Mr. Sadler's book. The whole case rested upon the medical statements. The noble Lord next adverted to the evidence of a person named Browne, as we understood, who, on being examined, stated, that he had been a considerable time employed in factories, and had never known any cruelty practised towards children employed in them. On being pressed, however, he admitted that he had a child employed in a factory with himself. The examination then proceeded as follows: —"Did you ever behave cruelly to that child?—I never did. Did you never correct her?—Yes; I think I corrected her once. Now, answer, Sir, did you not strike her down, and break her arm?—I did strike her once, and she fell; her arm came under, and it was broken. Why did you strike her?—Because she did not do as I wished her." Here, then, was a reason why a child was to be struck down and have her arm broken, merely because she did not do something that her father wished her to do. And this, too, was the admission of a person who deposed that he had never known cruelty practised towards children in factories. He would not detain the House by going further into detail, but would stand upon the evidence, and maintain that it was quite sufficient to enable Gentlemen to make up their minds upon the subject, and induce them to resist the appointment of the proposed Commission; or, if they did not do this, they would be bound to reject the Bill altogether. In the observations which he had felt it his duty to make upon this occasion, he had been careful to avoid touching upon the Factory Bill itself; and he was the more guarded on that point, because he felt satisfied that the evidence of the medical men was more than sufficient in support of his argument; or, if any thing further was wanting, it might be supplied by a reference to the numerous petitions presented on the subject. It should be considered, too, that the persons who had given that evidence, had no motive—could have no motive—beyond the influence of their feelings as humane and Christian men, who felt for the unjust sufferings of their fellow creatures. He was sure, that the appointment of the proposed Commission would lead to no useful object, and that, on the other hand, it was calculated to produce considerable evil. He hoped, in what he said, he had abstained from hurting the feelings of, or giving pain to, any person either in or out of doors. He had, undoubtedly, his own opinions upon the Factory Bill and its effects, and he would venture an opinion that, under the operation even of the best of its clauses, there would be a great deal of suffering; but into this part of the subject he would not then enter. He would, upon the grounds he had already stated, implore the House, unless they thought the whole of the medical evidence unworthy of belief, and, unless they wished to impose additional labour upon the poor little children employed in those establishments, to resist the appointment of this Commission. The country felt deeply on the subject; mankind, he might say, felt it deeply; for whoever read the American newspapers would see that the feelings upon the subject had travelled across the Atlantic. He was sure that every hon. Member who considered the subject for a moment, must be of opinion, that ten hours a-day was a sufficient period during which children should labour in a factory, and that those most interested in the matter would, at length, be obliged to assent to it, as a relief to their own wounded consciences.

Mr. *Horatio Ross* said, he thought it necessary to direct the attention of the House to one particular point, which was, that when the question was before a Committee, it was arranged that Mr. Sadler should make out a case for the men on the one hand, and that the masters were to be heard in reply. But, owing to the great mass of evidence brought forward, and the delays which unavoidably took place, Parliament was prorogued before the time for hearing the masters had arrived. He, among other members of the Committee, had left town, under the impression that no Report would be made; but by the management of the Chairman, that mass of evidence had been printed, which had had a very painful effect, and which he considered to be exaggerated in the highest degree. He considered it highly necessary, before the House should legislate on the subject, that they should hear the evidence, not only on the part of the children, but on the part of the masters. The owners of factories ought to have an opportunity of rebutting the charges which had been made against them; and he was convinced that in that case, at least in the county with which he was connected, they would be enabled to do away with much of the unfavourable impression which had been made against them. He was himself an advocate for the regulation of the hours of labour, on principles favourable to the children themselves; he was Member for a large manufacturing district; he had better opportunities than many Members of making himself master of the details of the subject; and he was prepared to go a great length for the comfort of children employed in the factories; but he thought it adviseable to leave the regulation of the hours of labour to the masters themselves, who were anxious that they should all be placed on a similar footing in that respect. At present, those who shortened the time of labour in their factories were subjected to a great disadvantage when placed in competition with those who employed the children for twelve or thirteen hours. He was disposed, after consulting with practical men, to support the hon. member for Lancashire, on the ground, that the labours of the Committee of which he had been a member were not completed. He considered it but a measure of justice that they should hear both sides.

Mr. *Gisbrone* said, that before he adverted to the immediate question under consideration, he begged to call attention to a letter which had been written on the 16th of last month relative to this subject, by Mr. Blake, and which letter was addressed to Lord Molyneux. The writer of that letter contended, that the reduction of the hours of labour would be highly injurious to the working classes, and that the party-coloured evidence taken before Mr. Sadler's Committee was either exaggerated or false; and all that the masters wanted was fair dealing and full inquiry. Mr. Blake described himself as being connected with a factory in which no less than 1,700 persons were employed, and that if the Ten Hours' Bill were carried, they must shut up their doors. Having adverted to this as a preliminary matter he would confine himself strictly to the subject under discussion. He asked the House if they thought that they had obtained such full information upon the hours of labour as to set to at once and legislate upon it? That was the question to be decided. He was rather afraid that the House was not aware of the manner in which this question had been agitated. Those persons who opposed the Ten Hours' Bill had been grossly abused and calumniated, as he himself had been by Mr. Oastler, at a public meeting in Leeds, who was, verily the Peter the Hermit who had preached up this crusade against the factories. On a former discussion in that House; he had appealed to hon. Members to suspend their judgment until they heard the evidence on both sides; he had done nothing more; and that simple expression of his opinion had called forth the grossest abuse of him from Mr. Oastler. He (Mr. Gisborne) had no interest whatever in any cotton factory—and it would not be too much for him to ask the House to make themselves more fully acquainted with the subject before they proceeded to legislate upon it. In 1825, the Committee of Sir John Hobhouse never listened to the restriction of juvenile labour to ten hours in the day; and what, he should like to know, had since occurred to render such a restriction a matter of necessity? Did Gentlemen think it right to legislate during every year between the operatives and the masters? Did they think that no imminent danger would arise from their so doing, to the manufacturing and other interests of the country? Mr. Sadler entreated the Committee, that they should hear his case first; and, on his pledging himself to hear evidence on the part of the masters afterwards, the Committee granted him his request, but that pledge was entirely falsified; and yet the noble Lord thought they had sufficient evidence to legislate at once upon so important a question. He wished to remove from the minds of that House and the country the impressions which prevailed relative to the general cruelty which was said to be practised in factories upon children. The noble Lord (Lord Ashley) threw overboard the evidence of the operatives, and he (Mr. Gisborne) would, in return, throw overboard the evidence taken before the Committee to which the noble Lord had so frequently alluded. Since the year 1819 the system pursued at the mills had been entirely altered and improved; they were now airy and commodious; and the dust, which was formerly so injurious to the operatives and the children, had been all but entirely remedied by the introduction of improved machinery. The members of Mr. Sadler's Committee separated with the understanding that none of the medical evidence would be published until the evidence for the masters had been heard; but this was unheeded, and Mr. Sadler obtained his object by publishing this *ex-parte* evidence. No cross-examination of the medical gentlemen was permitted; a certain string of questions had been drawn up, which no doubt might furnish valuable information for treatises upon medicine; but the questions so put, and the answers to them, did not bear at all upon the subject in discussion. Sir Anthony Carlisle was a very eminent man, and so was Dr. Brodie; but on referring to their evidence he found only ingenious theory in the former, and in the latter the House could see, on referring to the evidence, nothing at all to the subject. The questions put to him occupied 131 lines, while his answers were confined to seventy-one lines; and so it was with the other medical gentlemen. He would not read the treatises of these gentlemen, but the House could not fail to see that in many cases their answers to the questions put by the Committee were—"Yes," "No," "I think so," "Most certainly," "I should consider so." This was a fair sample of their evidence, and yet on such slender grounds they were called upon to unhinge the regulations which subsisted between the labourers and their employers. In the evidence of Mr. Guthrie, again, the longest answer that gentleman gave consisted of seven words; and he for one could place no reliance on the medical evidence. The hon. Gentleman, the member for Kircudbright said, he was ready to proceed without any further evidence. The fact was, that they were here legislating between too much work and too little to eat, and that was the practical part to be considered. Were the children to work as they now did and get a sufficiency of food, or work less and have only an insufficiency? Mr. Sadler had propounded certain theories in medicine, and simply called the medical gentlemen to prove them. The necessity for the Ten Hours' Bill had not been made out, and on these grounds he could not coincide with the views of the noble Lord (Lord Ashley). With respect to evidence given as to the employment of children in the Welsh factories, it was exaggerated, incredible, and false upon the face of it. No one could credit that evidence which went to show that children in Wales worked for twenty-four successive hours, and then rested for the next twenty-four. The hon. Member quoted at considerable length the evidence of a medical gentleman, of the name of Lutener, to prove that the whole statements were incorrect, and appealed to the right hon. member for Montgomeryshire, to correct him if he were in error. The same observations would apply to the evidence given as to the employment of children in Dundee; and, if the statements made had any foundation in truth, Dundee should be especially included in the Irish Coercive Bill. That evidence was a tissue of gross improbabilities. If he were allowed he should be able to show, that the statements made with respect to the cotton factories were unfounded misrepresentations, for he had an extensive knowledge of these factories, and he could, without the fear of contradiction, assert, that the children employed in them were as healthy and as happy as any children of the same class in the country. It was a well-known fact, that, connected with the cotton factories, there were benefit societies, and that the contributions of the members were greater, and the amount they received in cases of illness or necessary absence from work larger, than those of almost any other similar institution. This, then, was a proof that the persons employed in the cotton factories were not in so bad a condition as had been described, and, if the opportunity were afforded, he was fully persuaded, that the abstract medical opinion on which the case rested would be easily disproved. Before they proceeded to legislate upon the subject they were surely bound to have proper statistical information, and it was on the simple fact that they had no such information upon which he rested the vote that he meant to give in support of the Motion of his hon. friend.

Mr. *Wynn* had no expectation that such a debate as the present would have been got up, for, had he been aware that it was intended to enter upon a full discussion of the question, he should have been prepared with more accurate information on the subject than he then possessed. He was willing to admit that much stress had necessarily been laid upon medical opinions but, as a paper had been placed in his hands contradicting in some respects the evidence which had been adduced before the Committee of last year relative to the overworking of children in factories, he should not be doing justice to the individuals from whom it proceeded if he did not state its contents to the House. He would read it just as it had been placed in his hands. The right hon. Member accordingly read the following statement:

Names of Jurors before whom the following depositions were taken:—Thomas Williams, John Williams, John Jones, Evan Owen, George Pryse, Evan Thomas, John Jarman, William Bostock, James Morris, Joseph Davies, William Jones, Charles Nichols.

Montgomeryshire, to wit.—Informations of witnesses taken and acknowledged at Newtown, in the said county, on Tuesday, the 20th day of November, 1832, before Edward Johnes M. D., one of his Majesty's coroners for the said county, and a Jury there empanelled, to inquire into the death of Jane Jones.

Edward Jones, father of the deceased, says the deceased Jane Jones was upwards of eight years old, and was employed in the manufactory of Edward Williams. The time she was daily employed was from twelve to thirteen hours, including meal times, which were half an hour for breakfast, an hour for dinner, and half an hour for tea. Has known children kept at work longer than the above time, when there was a great press of work. They have been kept as much as seventeen hours formerly, but deponent believes that any time now beyond twelve or thirteen hours is entirely voluntary on the part of the children and their parents. His deceased child was brought home from the manufactory on Friday morning last, dreadfully burned—she died on Sunday morning.

John Jones is employed in Mr. Edward Williams's manufactory. Was there last Friday morning between eight and nine o'clock; the child, Jane Jones, was warming herself at the fire, the deponent being at his work, with his back turned towards her. Another child cried out that her clothes had taken fire. Deponent immediately ran to her assistance, and endeavoured to extinguish the flames; but before he accomplished this the child was severely burned. He was assisted by other persons in the manufactory; deponent is a stout healthy young man, and has been a manufacturer from his childhood.

Evan Thomas.—Was employed in the manufactory at the time Jane Jones's clothes took fire; has heard John Jones's evidence, and believes it to be a correct account of the accident; deponent assisted in taking the child home.

John Marpole, surgeon.—Was called in on Friday morning last to attend the deceased; she was severely burned; he attended her from that time to the time of her death which took place on Sunday morning, and which he has no doubt was occasioned by the burns.

William Lutener, surgeon.—Has lived in Newtown for the last ten years, and is of course well acquainted with the town. Has been informed, and believes, that children were formerly kept at their work in some of the manufactories thirty-six successive hours, including three hours allowed for meals and relaxation. He more particularly alludes to the manufactory at Milford; has frequently had such information from the children employed in the said manufactory, as they were going to and from their work; the health of the said children appeared to be good. He believes such extraordinary labour was perfectly voluntary. Gave evidence to the above effect before a Committee of the House of Commons.

The children from Mr. Edward Williams's manufactory, to the amount of seventeen, were at this period of the inquiry brought into the room, and they all appeared to be in perfect health.

Charles Nichols, one of the Jury, says that some years ago the children were kept longer to their labour than they are now; believes that at present their working hours do not exceed thirteen including meal time.

Richard Newell Davies.—Is a manufacturer and has been so about eighteen or twenty years. There are two sets of children employed those who are employed through the day being relieved by those who are employed through the night. Those employed in the day are very seldom employed in the night, and never but through their own choice and regulation amongst themselves. Employs at present about fifteen children.

Thomas Sayer is a manufacturer, and has kept engines about two years and a half. Employs from twenty to twenty-four children. The rule of his manufactory is to work ten hours exclusive of meal-times amounting to about two hours; there is a set of children for the night to relieve those who work through the day. The day children sometimes continue their work through the night, but it is entirely matter of choice, and for the sake of extra wages. Had never heard of children being kept at work for thirty-six hours till within these two or three last days, and believes, according to his experience, the thing to be impossible. The children deponent employs are, generally speaking, very healthy. Those employed by him during the night are some of the stoutest, not under twelve years of age, and from that to sixteen; and they have extra wages.

George Green.—Is a manufacturer, and has been so engaged for thirty years; has employed during the last four or five years twenty-four or twenty five children. Formerly he employed more. He has always employed two sets of children, one for day, and one for night work. The day set never continue their work through the night, except by choice. They do so sometimes for the sake of extra wages, and having the following day to themselves. The deponent employs younger children through the night than last witness, but they are never left without a man to look after them. From his own experience, should think it impossible to keep children at work thirty-six hours; has known them occasionally work for twenty-four successive hours, but this has been entirely their own choice.

David Davies.—Has been a manufacturer about twenty-five years. Employs now about twelve or fourteen children. He formerly kept more. When the trade is brisk he keeps two sets, one for night, and the other for day work. At ordinary times, having no occasion for night work, only one set is kept. Thirteen hours is the usual time of day work, including from two to three hours for meals. Had never heard of children being kept thirty-six hours at work till these last few days, and from his own experience believes it to be impossible.

Edward Williams.—Has been in the manufacturing trade thirty years; never heard of children being kept at work thirty-six hours, and is certain from his own experience it is impossible. Has heard the statement of the four last witnesses, and believes it to be correct.

Jeremiah Williams, Jeremiah Steele, and Solomon Jones are manufacturers, and carry on work at the Milford manufactory; never heard, till within the last few days, of children being kept at work, either there or anywhere else, thirty-six hours, and are certain it is impossible. Have heard the evidence of the five last witnesses, and are satisfied it is correct.

William Davies.—Has been a manufacturer many years, and has been in the habit of employing children. Had never heard, till within these last few days, of children being employed thirty-six successive hours, and thinks it is impossible. Has heard the evidence of the last seven witnesses and believes it to be correct.

Mary Davies.—Has a child employed in Mr. Green's manufactory; her usual time of working is thirteen hours, including meal-time. Has occasionally known her work sixteen hours, including meal-times; but this has been very seldom, and only at busy times. She has also been sometimes without work at all, but has at such times always received her wages. Mr. Green is a good master. The child has very good health.

Such was the statement shortly of men whom he knew to be most respectable. It had been sent to him by the Coroner for the county who was a medical practitioner of the highest reputation. But, dismissing the evidence given before the Committee of last year altogether from his mind, he still was of opinion that the House had grounds in abundance upon which to legislate. By the medical evidence given before the Committee of the Lords in a former Session it was manifest that more labour was required of children employed in factories than their constitutions could bear, and, such being the case, he did not conceive any rational man could doubt the propriety of limiting the hours of their work, and taking steps to prevent their parents from selling, as it was well known they did, not from any desire to injure their offspring but rather from their necessities, the labour of their children. No one could defend a system by which children were worked beyond their strength, and it was important also to know that by a statement on the subject made at the end of the last Session the mortality occasioned by the practice amounted in some places to as much as twelve per cent. Without going further into detail he thought a complete case for passing the Bill of the noble Lord had been made out; but he was at the same time ready to admit that they would not be doing justice to the masters if they did not afford them an opportunity which they sought of vindicating themselves from the heavy charge of inhumanity under which they laboured. If the Motion of the hon. member for Lancashire were agreed to, a return might be had within such a time as would enable the House to pass the noble Lord's Bill during the present Session; and it was with that view, and upon that understanding only, that he should vote for the issuing of the proposed Commission of Inquiry. He was as unwilling as the noble Lord, or any other hon. Member, to retard the progress of the measure; but he could not, at the same time, help thinking that no inconvenience would arise from the inquiry.

Mr. *Lennard*, recollecting that the result of the Committee which was appointed last year was, to prevent the Bill from being carried through in the course of the Session, would not consent to a similar proposition at the present time. He could see no object to be gained by the delay. He could understand why hon. Gentlemen connected with the manufacturing districts should wish to give the master-manufacturers an opportunity of explaining their conduct. But with that the House had nothing to do. Their duty was to consider, whether there were sufficient grounds to warrant them in legislating on the subject. He contended that there was abundant evidence for that purpose; and, further, he agreed with the right hon. member for Montgomeryshire, that if there were not a tittle of evidence, the enactments of the Bill were on the face of them such as every body must agree to. For what were they? That no person under age should be worked harder than the slaves in our colonies. He said harder, for by Act of Parliament the slaves in our colonies were not to be worked for more than nine hours in the day, and (besides the Sabbath) were to have one day of rest in the week, while even by this Bill of Amelioration, the factory children were to be worked ten hours in the day, and were not to have any day of rest. But the proposition of the noble Lord was so reasonable, that it would be a waste of time to advert further to the evidence, and he therefore only begged of the House to bear in mind that Mr. Sadler had not sought the Committee, but that, protesting against it as unnecessary, it was forced upon him. One great point to which this question had reference, was the great depreciation in the morals and manners of the people caused by the present system. It should not be considered merely on the ground of the welfare of the children themselves, but on that of the future welfare of the country generally. Could any thing be more frightful and abhorrent than the picture of moral debasement and profligacy which persons so employed presented? It was impossible by such a system to afford them education of any kind, and their bodies were so exhausted by fatigue as to render them unable to sit in church during divine service on Sundays. If, then, the Legislature felt it necessary to interpose on behalf of the slave, surely it was not too much to expect that House to interfere on behalf of a helpless child who was placed in a still worse situation. The object of the Poor Laws was to protect children as well as persons who were destitute, and if the Poor Laws had been properly administered, there would be no occasion for burthening children in this way beyond their power of endurance. Had the children in agricultural districts been treated as those connected with manufacturing places were, the Magistrates would be blamed, and an outcry would be raised which would not easily be stifled. He should resist this or any other Motion which might cause any delay in the progress of the noble Lord's Bill.

Lord *Morpeth* said, the question divided itself into two heads—first, the claim for the inquiry made by the manufacturers; and next, supposing that claim to be admitted, whether the general case should outride the particular one. What were the facts of the case? The Committee was forced on Mr. Sadler much against his will; he consented to it only because he could not hinder it. The evidence taken before this Committee was all on one side and to support one view; but there was a distinct understanding and agreement that the other side of the case should afterwards be fully and fairly investigated. The evidence closed with the close of the Session, and Members had left London before its publication. Now, he doubted whether in strict fairness this should have been, tending as it did to raise unfair prejudices against individuals; yet, on the whole, he could not regret it, inasmuch as he was sure its publication would have a righteous and benevolent result. He had no hesitation in believing that if the inquiry had been further carried on, as many sleek, straight, and chubby children would have been brought forward as there had been deformed and emaciated ones. He must say, he very much doubted the accounts of deformed bodies and debased minds created by this system, and thought the odium of great and continued cruelty which had been attached to it was the representation of the exception and not of the rule; that what had been advanced was not an accurate representation of the ordinary economy of a mill, nor the true picture of the feelings and conduct of a British manufacturer. He felt, that the manufacturers ought to be allowed an opportunity of showing, that inhumanity formed no part of the economy of a British factory, and that the statements which had been made upon the subject were not the fact. This vindication of the masters was, however, perfectly distinct from the Bill of his noble friend, which rested upon premises that were undeniable, and beyond the reach of cavil or doubt; and if it was, therefore, not to be denied that undue hardship and suffering were inflicted upon children, it must be admitted, that Parliament was imperiously required to enact some substantial and efficient measure for their relief. He had himself been prepared to take upon him the responsibility of introducing a similar Bill, and, that being the case, he hoped his noble friend would not consent to delay the progress of his measure an instant. The matter was not now in his own hands, but he should act just as if it were, and vote against the Motion for a Commission.

Mr. *George W. Wood* said, he was extremely unwell, and would gladly have refrained from taking any part in the debate, but his sense of duty compelled him to do so. He was bound to advocate most strongly the necessity of instituting a fresh inquiry, and he must contend that the noble Lord (Ashley) had founded his proposition on a contemplation only of the evidence on one side. That noble Lord had also, in his speech on the present occasion, laid great stress on the evidence adduced before the House of Lords in 1815, forgetting that, since that period, such immense changes had taken place in the character and management of factory labour, as rendered that evidence no evidence at all. He was surprised to hear from the noble Lord the argument that the manufacturers ought to be indifferent to the preservation of their characters every where else but in their own districts. The manufacturers only asked the House to complete that investigation which it last year determined to enter upon. It seemed to him rather singular that the noble Lord (Ashley), in quoting and commenting upon the medical evidence which applied to the question, should have selected those portions only which favoured his own view of the case, while he threw overboard all that was of an opposite character. He wished the noble Lord had referred to the evidence of Dr. Holdson, who was much respected at Manchester, but whose opinions were somewhat at variance with those of many of the medical men who were examined last year. The noble Lord proposed, upon what he must call partial and inconclusive evidence, a measure, which, as it stood, would reduce by one-sixth the whole of the productive industry of the country. Was it too much, then, for those who not only were deeply interested in the subject themselves, whose character was involved, and whose property was at stake, and who naturally wished to promote the welfare of their own workmen and people in their own neighbourhood, to ask the House to see how the facts really stood, and whether the regulations which were proposed would accomplish the objects in view before those regulations received the force of law? Would the noble Lord venture to say, that he had ascertained, on his own authority, that such would be the case? Was it not just possible that there might be peculiar circumstances in different manufactures, or even in the same manufacture in different parts of the empire, which would require different enactments? He was anxious to protect the children in factories, but, in doing that, let them take care not to ruin those manufactures on which these children depended for bread. The hon. Member concluded by saying, that he thought the inquiry should be granted, in justice not only to the manufacturers, but also to the working classes themselves.

Mr. *Robinson* was of opinion that the House was in a condition to legislate at once on this important subject, not only on the evidence taken last year, but on the evidence taken on previous occasions. He was not of opinion the evidence produced had shown that the manufacturers were heartless or unmindful of the health and comfort of their labourers; but the testimony of medical men had convinced him that working for twelve hours a-day was ruinous to the health of the children. And as he saw no limitation on the time of employing them, unless the Legislature imposed it, he was willing at once to legislate on the subject. He doubted if a limitation of the labour of children would have the effect upon the Poor Laws which was anticipated by hon. Members who had spoken; for working people, when asked for what reason they allowed their children to work for so many hours, uniformly answered, that nothing but distress forced them to commit such cruelty; and when further questioned, they admitted that much of the produce of their labour was spent in medicinesand medical attendance. It was but fair, therefore, to suppose that the noble Lord's Bill, in as far as it would have the effect of improving the health of the children, would enable them to work more regularly, and in as far as considerable expense would be saved from the same cause, would not have the effect of increasing the Poor-rates to the extent anticipated by the hon. Members who had spoken for the Motion. He was at a loss to know from what source the hon. member for Lancashire had derived the calculation which went to show that the adoption of the noble Lord's Bill would diminish the productive power of the country by one sixth. He supposed that the hon. Member must have meant the produce of infant labour. He was inclined to go fully as far as the Bill of the noble Lord went; and if the manufacturing and trading superiority of this country over foreign countries was only to be maintained by a continuance of the present system, he would be ready to sacrifice that superiority. He denied, however, that the trade could be maintained by such a system. If there were no other way of maintaining the mercantile superiority of this country than by pressing as at present on the labour of children, their condition would get worse and worse, and the difficulties of the manufacturer would daily increase. He thought, therefore, that in justice to the people, as well as in policy and morality, the House was bound to adopt the proposition of the noble Lord. He hoped, at all events, if the House considered further evidence necessary before proceeding to legislate upon the subject, that they would re-appoint a Committee of Inquiry rather than the Commission moved for by the hon. Member.

Dr. *Lushington* said, that the only question was, whether the House was in a condition to legislate; and when he looked to the quantity and variety of the evidence which was before them, he could not doubt that the House possessed sufficient information. He thought that they had complete evidence to prove what was necessary to do in this matter; and after all the arguments which he had heard on both sides of the question, he had come to the conclusion that the hon. Member's Motion was not only unnecessary, but, from the delay it would occasion, decidedly injurious. If the evidence of the medical gentlemen, and the evidence taken before the Committee of last year, and on previous occasions, gave a true view of the state of the children in the manufacturing districts, what would the effect of the delay be? A renewal and continuance of the same miseries to an indefinite period till those Commissioners chose to give in their Report. But what valid evidence could be obtained in the face of the fact stated by Dr. Bailey and the other medical men who were examined, that no infant could labour for twelve hours in a manufactory without injury to health? And why take evidence by means of Commissioners? He did not know what confidence the House might place in evidence taken by Commissioners, but he could say, that he would place none. He knew that Sir John Hobhouse had wished to go further in his Bill than he had gone, and that it was only from a wish to have the co-operation of the manufacturers, in order to ensure a certain *quantum* of good, rather than have none, that he did not carry the principles of his measure further. He must protest against the Motion.

Mr. *Mark Phillips* contended that it was but just to the manufacturers to institute a counter-inquiry, in order that the real state of the children employed in the cotton trade might be ascertained. If the contemplated Bill were ever adopted, he hoped it would be accompanied by other measures, to protect the interests of the owners of machinery, in the present depressed state of the cotton trade. It was well known that the cotton-trade was in such a state that the profits were nearly annihilated; and if the noble Lord's Bill passed, he was sure that they would soon hear of that state of things which the hon. member for Birmingham had described. When he heard the manufacturers called murderers, and charged with infanticide—when their factories were termed bastiles, and when there was a system of agitation and excitement on this subject out of the House, great care should be taken to legislate with calmness. He did not ask inquiry for the sake of delay, but because he thought it right in that House to be quite sure of their ground before passing an onerous, and he was afraid a ruinous, enactment.

Mr. *Robert Ferguson* gave all credit to Mr. Sadler for the humanity of his motives, but that gentleman had seen only one side of the question. He advocated inquiry, for the sake of the children themselves. He would divide the Commission into three branches, in order that the delay might be as little as possible, and the measure, after due consideration, might be passed in the present Session.

Mr. *Hardy*, as a Representative of a borough dependent upon factories, said, that the Motion for a Commission, if agreed to, would prevent legislation this year, and excite, and properly, the greatest dissatisfaction in the great body of the country. There had been an open Committee, and a full case had been made out for legislation. The system was monstrous, and even at that midnight hour there were many hapless children suffering from the effects of the present system. If a Commission were granted, its inquiries must be partial, or they must extend to a great period of time. He admitted readily that there were many factories in which not only no cruelty was practised, but every attention was paid to the comfort and welfare of children; but he contended that, upon the other hand, it was established beyond the reach of contradiction that there were also a great many factories in which children were worked to the prejudice of their health, and even of their lives. Why should not the House apply the same rule to the factories as to Ireland? When the Coercive Bill was moved, it was not pretended that the whole of Ireland was a scene of outrage, of bloodshed, and of murder; and yet, upon the statement of the Minister, of facts taken to be notorious, the Bill received the sanction of the great majority of the House. So now it was not pretended that every factory was the scene of cruelty or of premature disease and death; but the Ten Hours' Bill was called for, because it had been proved in a great mass of evidence that, in a large number of factories a system did exist which tended to injure the health and to destroy the life of the children employed. But they were told of the immense value of the factories, and that the manufacturers would be ruined if interfered with. He thought it ill founded; but, if it were well founded, he would apply to it the spirit of a remark he had heard fall from the late Mr. Wyndham. That statesman had exclaimed, "Let our commerce be sacrificed rather than the Constitution." He would say, let the manufacturers perish, rather than justice and humanity.

Mr. *Spring Rice* said, he had to apologise for the absence of his noble friend (Lord Althorp) and his right hon. friend the Vice-President of the Board of Trade. They had both been anxious to attend in their places, but were compelled by indisposition to be absent. He had been deputed by his noble friend to learn, as well as he was able, the prevailing opinion of the House as to the course that was desirable to be pursued. Undoubtedly, his noble friend was not without an opinion of his own; but the Government were anxious, upon so important a matter, to hear the opinions and the arguments of those hon. Members who were largely engaged in manufactures, and, consequently, intimately acquainted with the subject. He had listened most attentively to the whole of the debate; and he was bound to declare that, in his opinion, the weight of argument was decidedly in favour of the issuing of a Commission. And he took upon himself to say, the best and the readiest way to attain the truth was by the means of a Commission. If the proposition had been for reviving the Committee of last year he should have received it with jealousy, for he was convinced that delay would have been inevitable and the conclusion unsatisfactory. If the Commission proposed were appointed, it would be the duty of Government to select proper persons as Commissioners, to appoint the places to which they should go, and to point out the subjects upon which they should collect evidence. At the present moment he contended the House was not in a condition to deal with the question, whether with reference to doing justice to the manufacturers, to the children, or to the public. What had already been done was a proof of the necessity of a Commission. The subject upon which they were called upon to legislate was not merely one involving money, but involving also a great amount of labour, which was the means of promoting human happiness and national prosperity. What had the previous House of Commons done with respect to the subject? Why, feeling its vast importance, it had determined to acquire information, and a Committee had consequently been appointed. Now, before that Committee, the case of one party only had been heard. Surely they were not prepared to legislate upon a case which had been only half argued, and half inquired into? But it was said the Commission would not help them, because, in order for it to acquire full information, it must be in existence a long while. Why, if more than one Commission was necessary, let there be more. In such a case, when the manufactures of the country were at stake, expense could be of no consideration. But some hon. Members seemed to think that the Government had particular feelings in the matter, and that the Commission might be prejudiced. What interest could the Government have but that of the country? Again, if a Commission were appointed, and the advocates of the noble Lord's Bill found that the inquiry proceeded tardily or unfairly, they might at once move the second reading of their measure. In the Bill of the noble Lord there were many points which required consideration. For instance, was it to be said that the woollen factories of Gloucestershire were to be interfered with?—that, in fact, all the factories worked by water power were to be injured? Suppose that the effect of the noble Lord's measure should be, as was very likely, to throw the children out of employment, what was then to become of them? Granting that the labour was severe, was not severe labour with bread better than no labour without bread? He contended that the evidence had in many respects been proved to contain gross exaggerations. It had been stated that a child was worked thirty-six hours without a pause. Now, that had been found not to be the case. In supporting the proposition for a Commission he was not opposing the introduction of a proper Bill, but taking the readiest means of leading to one. The interests of the manufacturers were by far too vast and important to be lightly dealt with, and they were entitled to the attention which they claimed. "Therefore, all we entreat of you," said the right hon. Gentleman, "is to act with the same discretion as your predecessors, and to get the information first, and then to make what use of it you please."

Mr. *Matthias Attwood* said, that he, like the right hon. Member, had attended most carefully to the whole of the debate, and he had come to a decidedly different conclusion to that expressed by the right hon. Member as to the weight to be attached to the arguments which had been adduced. He regretted to hear the speech of the right hon. Member. It would be regarded by anxious thousands as a declaration of the intentions of Government to defeat or to retard the Bill of the noble Lord. It could be regarded in no other light; for no one could fail to remark that the arguments used by the right hon. Member were directed against the Bill itself of the noble Lord quite as much as they were to the question then more properly before the House. He therefore could not but infer, that it was the Bill of the noble Lord that was the real mark of objection, and that the proposed Commission was merely a means of arriving at the desired end. Why, what was the object for which the Commission was required? It was said that by the evidence before the Committee last Session the character of the manufacturers had been unjustly prejudiced. Now, surely that prejudice, if it had existed, must be removed by the debate of that night. It was admitted upon all hands that there were many factories well managed; but it must also be admitted that in many factories there were gross abuses. They were told, that in the evidence taken before the Committee, there were many exaggerations. Be it so. Make what allowance it was thought fit for exaggeration, and still an immense mass of evidence would remain, which showed beyond question that a great body of the infant population of the country was subject to a system prejudicial to health and even destructive of life. The right hon. Member and others spoke as if the charge against the manufacturers was in the Bill of the noble Lord. It was no such thing. The charge against the manufacturers was in the evidence, and not in the Bill that had been so sedulously attacked, and to postpone which was the real object in asking for a Commission. Now it was remarkable that, while the evidence was taking, the manufacturers asked for no Commission; and also that they were content to labour under all the imputations heaped upon them by the evidence, until the Bill was again brought forward, and then they found out that their character had been assailed, and must be cleared by a Commission. Speaking of what he called the exaggerations in the evidence the hon. member for Derbyshire had brought forward against them Mr. Gregg, he would quote to the House the opinions of Mr. Gregg, as stated upon the subject, without reference to the measure now proposed. (The hon. Member quoted from a pamphlet written by Mr. Gregg some years ago, in which he declared that nothing could remove the cruel abuses then prevailing in the factories but a reduction in the hours of labour.)—When the House was told to bear in mind the vast importance of the manufactures, he would ask, was not that an inferior or a worthless consideration when its maintenance involved the very existence of the helpless beings who were compelled to produce those manufactures? He would give his vote against the motion for a Commission, because he thought it was unnecessary for the purpose he had in view, and would much interfere with the measure of the noble Lord, the member for Dorsetshire.

Mr. *Cornish*, amidst unceasing cries of question, opposed the Commission, but his observations were rendered inaudible by the uproar.

Mr. *William Duncombe* protested against these extraordinary vociferations, and cries of "Question!" He presumed that hon. Members had made up their minds on which side to vote, and so considered discussion unnecessary. He was, however, far from entertaining that opinion, and would not be deterred by such clamour from expressing his sentiments. He was strongly opposed to the Commission as an unnecessary and mischievous thing; and he considered that this Motion would inevitably lead to the ultimate rejection of the excellent Bill of the noble member for Dorsetshire; but this, he supposed, was the object aimed at by hon. Members. As to the evidence about which so much had been said, he fully believed that, making every allowance for certain errors and exaggerations, the statements were substantially correct, and quite sufficient for the House to act upon. As to what had been said about the possibility of procuring the proposed additional evidence in sufficient time to enable them to pass the Bill by the end of the Session, he denied the possibility altogether. If they did not get the Bill upon the evidence already before them, they certainly would get no bill at all. If they wanted local evidence, there was the petition from Leeds; which was signed by no less than 16,000 persons, and fully corroborated the statements they had heard of the cruelty practised in the factories. He would also refer them to the statements made at a public meeting at Oldham by a clergyman, which were equally corroborative. That gentleman said, the question was one which was most intimately connected with the cause of humanity. Every one who felt for his species must conclude that the over-working of infants must be put a stop to; though he was sorry to say there was a most determined party working and straining every nerve to oppose the measure now before Parliament to effect that object. He, however, would give his testimony in favour of the Ten Hours' Bill. He had witnessed the pallid cheek, and the shadow-worn frame, as he stood by the death-bed of the factory child. He had viewed it with pain, and lamented that such scenes existed. He, therefore, now stood forward to aid, by his humble advocacy, in ameliorating this state. He was sorry that the Cabinet Ministers were not in their places. The sudden indisposition of the noble Chancellor of the Exchequer was peculiarly unfortunate. But, however, as they could not have the benefit of the opinions of the present Cabinet Ministers, he would at least give them what had been said by a former Minister—no other than the right hon. William Huskisson—who, in the year 1826, delivered a speech, in which, as the subject was not before the House, he went out of his way to give his opinion, and strongly advocated the necessity of doing away with this dreadful system of abuse—an abuse on which the right hon. Gentleman made these powerfully-expressed animadversions.—The hon. Member read the following passage—' I have seen, and ' many other Gentlemen have no doubt ' seen, in a Macclesfield newspaper of the ' 19th of February, 1825, the following ' advertisement:—" To overseers, guardians of the poor, and families desirous of ' settling in Macclesfield. Wanted immediately, from four to five thousand persons." [*Loud cries of* "hear! hear!"] ' The House may well express their surprise; but I beseech their attention to ' the description of persons required by ' this advertisement—" from seven to ' twenty years of age;" so that the silk ' manufacturers were content to receive ' children of the tender age of only seven ' years—" to be employed in the throwing ' and manufacturing of silk; the great ' increase of the trade having caused a ' great scarcity of workmen. It is suggested that this is a most favourable ' opportunity for persons with large families, and overseers who wish to put out ' children," children of seven years of ' age! " as apprentices, to insure them a ' comfortable livelihood. Application to ' be made, if by letter, post paid, to the ' printer of this paper." Humanity is not ' the least remarkable part of this precious ' document; and the House will not fail ' to observe, how admirably the cruelty of ' confining children of seven years of age, ' to labour in a silk-mill for twelve or ' fifteen hours out of the four-and-twenty, ' is tempered, by the inducement to ' parents to provide for their families for ' life. What sort of provision that has ' been, the present wretched state of those ' helpless infants will best evince. And ' here I cannot help observing, that, at the ' very time such an invitation was sent ' forth to overseers and parents, by the ' owners of silk-mills, this House was very ' properly occupied in passing a Bill, to ' prevent the employment of children ' under nine years of age in cotton factories.'* He conjured the House once more to reject the motion for a Commission, because, if it were entertained, there was but little probability of the Bill of the noble Lord being successful this Session, if it did not prove the means of totally overthrowing a Bill which was loudly called for by the dictates of justice and humanity.

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* Hansard (new series) xiv. p. 794.

Lord *John Russell* said, that if he thought that the interests of those connected with, or engaged in, manufactories, could be promoted by the rejection of the Motion before the House, he would willingly oppose it, and go at once to the consideration of the Bill of the noble Lord. He fully admitted, that the subject was one on which the Parliament ought to legislate, and the only question was, how to legislate in the best manner. The hon. member for Lancashire thought that they ought to begin by a Commission. The principal objection to that course was to be found in the Speech of his hon. and learned friend the member for the Tower Hamlets, who asked, were they to allow the present system to go on pending such inquiry? He would say, that there was little danger of any system injurious to the children being continued during such investigation. If ever there was a time when the children stood a chance better than another of being well treated, and not in any degree over-worked, it was when the eyes of Parliament and the country were fixed on our factories. He believed the object of all was, in the result, the same; but as the necessity of legislation was admitted, would it not be better to legislate with all the facts and with the fullest evidence before them, than to make a law on half information which must necessarily be shallow and injurious? Much reliance was placed on the evidence adduced by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sadler) before the Committee; but without detracting from the merits of that Gentleman, he thought that evidence which a Commission would be likely to collect would be more entitled to respect than that which he individually could procure. His noble friend (Lord Althorp), whose absence he regretted, had intimated to him that he should not object to a Commission if the feeling of the House should be for it, but he thought it would be a better course to refer the noble Lord's (Ashley's) Bill to a Select Committee, not with the view of taking evidence, but for the purpose of giving to the whole measure a more full, calm, and deliberate consideration, than it would be likely to get in a Committee of the whole House. He regretted, that the noble Lord (Ashley) had so changed his Bill as to make it appear that the Government took part with the manufacturers against the workmen; that such was not the wish of any member of Government it was hardly necessary for him to say. At the same time it was now unavoidable, and he could only regret that his noble friend had not framed his Bill with a little more attention to prudence.

Mr. *Grantley Berkley* said, that as the representative of the western division of Glocestershire, he could not consent, by legislating in haste, and without inquiry upon this subject, to trample upon the character of all the manufacturers of England. He gave his assent most cordially to the Motion then before the House.

Mr. *Maxwell* said, that if the Motion could be so limited, as not to prevent the passing of the Bill, he would consent to the appointment of a Commission, but on no other condition.

Mr. *John Fielden* had been engaged in the cotton trade since he was ten years of age. He was then introduced into his father's mill, and laboured for ten hours a-day. If he thought that this inquiry would elicit truth, he should be the last to vote against it; but he was sure it would not. He was confident that if a Commission went down, the Commissioners would return with evidence that was anything but the truth, or, at least, anything but the whole truth. Preparations would be made to receive them, and the cotton mills would be put into such a condition as they were never in at any other time. He himself had always petitioned the Legislature for a reduction in the time of labour for the children in the factories. On occasion of Sir Robert Peel's Bill, he had petitioned in its favour; he wrote a letter to say, that all that was required to be known was then before the House, and that the attempt to have a Committee to examine evidence was an attempt on the part of the opponents of the measure, to delay the Bill altogether. It had that effect then, and he believed that it would have the same effect now. What evidence could be wanted to show that children of ten years of age were not fit to labour for twelve or fourteen hours a-day? He knew, from his own experience, that they were not capable of undergoing that labour. When he worked in the mill, he was much worn by the fatigue, although he only worked for ten hours a-day, and of course had many indulgences that other children had not. He had had ample opportunity since that time of knowing the effect of such continued labour not on children alone, but on grown-up men, and could bear full testimony to its wearing effect upon the constitution. The subject was one of importance, and the petitions they had had ought not to be treated with disregard, and it ill became those who were legislating for the protection of children to treat it with levity. He thought that the medical evidence already given on this question was clear enough, and he himself could so completely corroborate it, that he should have no difficulty whatever in saying that further inquiry was quite needless.

Mr. *John Stanley* admitted, that a case was made out for some legislation, but he did not know whether the hours should be nine, ten, or six, and on the ground that this was not decided, he supported the Commission.

Sir *Oswald Mosley* said, that from Wiltshire, Glocestershire, and Somersetshire, no witnesses whatever had been examined, and yet the manufactories in those counties were to be subject to the proposed regulations. A Clause in the Bill, for example, prohibited labour after eight o'clock in the evening, and in some water mills they only began to work at twelve or two o'clock, which would prevent their labouring more than six hours.

Mr. *Wilson Patten*, in reply, said, that he would meet the views of the hon. Gentleman opposite if he altered his Motion to the following :—" That an Address be presented to his Majesty, requesting his Majesty to appoint a Commission to proceed with the utmost despatch to collect evidence in the manufacturing districts as to the employment of children in factories; and as to the propriety of curtailing the hours of labour, so as to enable the House to legislate upon the subject during the present Session."

The House divided on the Motion—Ayes 74: Noes 73: Majority in favour of a Commission 1.

List of the NOES.

Agnew, Sir A.
Attwood, M.
Attwood, T.
Baillie, J. E.
Baillie, Colonel J.
Bainbridge, E. T.
Banks, W. J.
Baring, A.
Barnard, E. G.
Barnett, C. J.
Bayntun, S. A.
Bellew, R. M.
Bewes, T.
Beauclerk, Major A.
Bish, T.
Blackstone, W. S.
Bowes, J.
Bruce, Lord E.
Burrell, Sir C.
Childers, J. W.
Cornish, J.
Corry, H.
Dillwyn, L. W.
Duncombe, Hon. W.
Etwall, R.
Fergusson, C.
Finn, W. F.
Fitzgerald, T.
Gaskell, D.
Gore, M.
Greene, T.
Grey, Hon. C.
Grey, Sir G.
Gully, J.
Hardy, J.
Hughes. H.
Hutt, W.
Jerningham, Hon. H.
Jones, Captain
Lamont, N.
Lennard, T, B.
Lincoln, Lord
Lyall, G.
Martin, J.
Maxwell, Sir J.
Morpeth, Lord
O'Brien, C.
O'Connell, J,
O'Connell, M.
Paget, F.
Plumptre, J. P.
Poulton, J. S.
Pringle, R.
Robinson, G. E.
Ruthven,
Scholefield, J.
Stewart, C.
Strickland, G.
Torrens, Colonel
Troubridge, Sir T.
Tynte, C. J. Kemyss
Vigors, N. A.
Vincent, F
Vivian, Sir R.
Welby, G. E.
Wilks, J.
Young, F.

TELLERS.
Ashley, Lord
Inglis, Sir R.

Lord *Ashley* said, that from the division which the House had just come to it was clear that some Bill for the regulation of factories must pass this Session. As the House had decided to appoint a Commission, he thought that he had a right to ask Ministers to appoint the Commission immediately, and to place upon it medical men of the highest skill and eminence. If they did not, the country would be of opinion that justice was not done to this question. He was of opinion that a Commission would be of little use, as individuals who were interested might refuse to give evidence before it, and the Commission had no power either to compel the attendance of witnesses or to force them to answer. He thought that the Commission should be armed with power to compel evidence. It was said, that the Commission was to proceed with despatch, in order to enable the House to legislate on the subject during the present Session; but he wished to know how it could travel over the different parts of England and Scotland, and collect evidence in time for that purpose? It had been said that the evidence collected by Mr. Sadler was too general; he was afraid that the evidence collected by this Commission would be too particular. He hoped that the Commission would turn out advantageously. He disclaimed all desire of obtaining popularity by bringing forward this measure, and, at the same time, expressed his belief that his Bill would be of as much advantage to Ministers as it would be to himself.

Mr. *Spring Rice* said, that the disclaimer of the noble Lord was perfectly unnecessary. He might be satisfied that the utmost care would be taken by Government in the selection of the Commissioners, for it would be worse than folly to appoint Commissioners whose characters were not far beyond all impeachment. It ought, however, to be observed, that this appointment of a Commission was not upon the motion of the Government, but on that of an individual wholly unconnected with Government. If information were necessary on this subject, it could be rendered valuable only by having it procured by well-qualified persons, and, therefore, Ministers had the strongest interest in appointing competent men. He did not think that any persons would refuse to answer questions put to them by the Commissioners; but if any person did refuse there could be no doubt that the House would immediately pass a short Bill to compel them to answer, and even upon oath, if required. As soon as the Commissioners were appointed, the terms of the Commission, and the names of the parties appointed, should be laid before the House, and the noble Lord would then have the opportunity of objecting to the Commission and Commissioners, if he thought proper.

Sir *Robert Inglis* suggested to Ministers the propriety of making the Commission not only able and intelligent, but also numerous, in order that it might institute inquiries in different places at the same time.

HOUSE OF LORDS,
Thursday, *April* 4, 1833.

Minutes.] Bill. Read a second time:—Marine Mutiny.

Petitions presented. By the Duke of Gordon, from Alford, against the Ministerial System of Education (Ireland).—By Lord Suffield, from Newcastle-upon-Tyne, against Slavery.—By the Earls of Rosebery and Gosford, the Duke of Newcastle, and the Bishop of Lincoln, from several Places,—for the Better Observance of the Sabbath.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
Thursday, *April* 4, 1833.

Minutes.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of Mr. Lefroy, a List of Barristers appointed by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland under the Irish Reform Act, for the Registry of Persons entitled to vote.

Bill. Read a third time:—Seamen's Hospital.

Petitions presented. By Mr. Bernal, from Rochester, complaining of the Administration of the Affairs of that Corporation.—By Colonel G. Langton, from Weston-upon-Mare, against the Irish Disturbances Suppression Bill; from Wellow and Yatton, against Tithes; and from Bath; and by Mr. Baillie, from Bristol, for Removing the Civil Disabilities of the Jews.—By Sir H. Willoughby, from Newcastle-under-Lyne; and by Mr. Davenport, from Burslem,—for a Repeal of the Sale of Beer Act.—By Sir Henry Willoughby, from a Congregation at Newcastle-under-Lyne; by Colonel Gore Langton, from Bath; Mr. Davenport, from Burslem; Mr. Petre, from York; and by Mr. Todd, from Honiton,—for Relief for the Dissenters from Civil Disabilities affecting them.—By the Solicitor General, from Banbury; by Lord Morpeth, from Hakmondwike; and by Mr. Davenport, from Norton-in-the-Moors,—for the Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By Lord Morpeth, Colonel Gore Langton, and Mr. Davenport, from several Places,—against Slavery.—By Mr. Attwood, from Shipley, and Windhill, in favour of the Factories Regulation Bill.

[The Houses adjourned for the Easter Holidays.]

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
Monday, *April* 15, 1833.

Minutes.] Bills. Read a third time:—Customs' Wharfs' Conveyance.

Petitions presented. By Mr. F. Buxton, from Jedburgh, against the Punishment of Death for Forgery.—By Mr. Lambton, Mr. F. Buxton, Mr. Harvey, Mr. Abercrombie, and Mr. Blamire, Sir Oswald Moseley, and Mr. E. Tennent, from a Number of Places,—for the Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By Lord John Russel, from Chudley, &c.; and by Mr. A. Chapman, from the Dissenters of Whitby, for a Removal of the Disabilities affecting the Dissenters.—By Mr. Abercrombie, from Edinburgh, in favour of the Royal Burghs (Scotland) Bill; from the Printers of Edinburgh, for the Repeal of the Taxes on Knowledge; from other Trades, for a Repeal of the Duty on Stamp Receipts; and against the Disturbances (Ireland) Bill.—By Mr. Lambton, from the Clergy of Durham, against the Church Reform (Ireland) Bill.—By Mr. Murray, from Leith, for a free Trade with China.—By Mr. Roebuck, from a Literary Society at Worcester, for adopting a National System of Education; from the Disciples of Mr. Owen, in favour of the Factories Regulation Bill; and from St. James's, Bristol, for a Repeal of the Assessed Taxes.—By Sir Charles Coote, from Maryborough, complaining of the Corporation, and praying for Relief.—By Mr. Richard Potter, from an Association at Manchester, in favour of the Highways Bill.—By Mr. Oliphant, from Perth, for an Alteration in the Royal Burghs (Scotland) Bill; and from the Hand-loom Weavers of that Town, for a Board of Trade, and for Relief.—By Sir Oswald Mosley, from two Places, against the Sale of Beer Act.—By Mr. S. Lefevre, from Winchester, for a Repeal of the Duty on Malt.—By Mr. Vivian, Mr. A. Chapman, Mr. Abercrombie, Mr. Blamire, Mr. Morison, Mr. Sanford, Mr. F. Buxton, Mr. Lambton, Mr. Madocks, and Mr. S. Lefevre, Sir Richard Bulkeley, Sir Oswald Mosley, and Sir Francis Blake, from seventy-six Places,—for the Abolition of Slavery.—By Sir Francis Burdett, from Bath, not to Legislate as to Colonial Slavery until further Inquiry was made into the condition of the Slaves; and from St. George's, Hanover Square, complaining of the heavy, and unequal Rate levied on them for the Support of the Police, and for Relief; also complaining of Irish Paupers, and for Poor Laws to Ireland.

Proclaiming of Kilkenny.] On the Question that the House resolve itself into a Committee of Supply—

Mr. *O'Connell* said, that he saw no person present connected with the Irish Government; but he must, notwithstanding, request some information with respect to the Proclamations lately issued by the Lord-lieutenant of Ireland under the Bill which deprived that country of the Constitution. It had been decidedly intimated on the passing of that Bill, that there was no disposition to carry it into effect. It was indeed expressly said, that it never would be carried into effect, except under the pressure of absolute necessity. In spite of this assurance, a most wanton and outrageous act had been committed under the Bill, which sufficiently showed the truth of what he had often said, that despotic power could not be intrusted in the hands of any man. Possession was itself a temptation to abuse it. The Bill had hardly arrived in Ireland before the county of Kilkenny was put out of the pale of the law. Part of that county was, he acknowledged, in a disturbed state; but there was a considerable part of it perfectly tranquil; yet this was punished indiscriminately with the rest. But what he particularly wished to impress upon the House was, that the county of the city of Kilkenny had also been put under the operation of the Act, although there was not the slightest appearance of insubordination in that city to justify it; for, if he was rightly informed, the offences committed there within the last twelve months amounted only to five, the most serious of which was a petty larceny case. One reason assigned for this wanton outrage was that since the county of Kilkenny was in so disturbed a state as to require proclamation, they must also extend the proclamation to the city, or else the inhabitants of the proclaimed districts would nullify the Proclamation by going into the city. This was a most ridiculously frivolous pretext; they must, on this principle, proclaim the whole country at once. The real state of the case was, that it was considered much more convenient for the members of the military tribunals to remain comfortably in their hotels in the city, than to venture out here and there in the really disturbed parts of the country. This was the real reason why a city which had committed no offence, and which contained a population of 24,000 souls, had been put out of the pale of the law. The hon. Member concluded by moving, that there be laid before the House copies of all proclamations issued by the Lord-lieutenant under the Irish Coercive Bill, the reasons given for the same, and the amount of crime committed within the last twelve months in the city of Kilkenny.

Lord *Althorp* begged to suggest to the hon. Member the expediency of withdrawing his Motion till the right hon. the Secretary for Ireland took his seat tomorrow. He fully concurred in the observation of the hon. and learned Gentleman, that the House, having granted these extraordinary powers to the Government, was bound to keep a jealous eye over the exercise of them.

Motion withdrawn.

SALARIES OF THE JUDGES.] Mr. *Hume* said, as there were strong rumours of very considerable changes in the judicial department, in consequence of some retirements being about to take place, and as some other changes would, of course, follow, he was anxious to remind the noble Lord (Lord Althorp) that the salaries of the Judges had for the last thirty years, been increased to a very enormous extent. When any new appointment took place, he hoped that Government would show that they intended seriously to grant some relief to the country, overburthened by heavy taxation.

Lord *Althorp* said, the present Lord Chief Justice of the Court of King's Bench had accepted that appointment upon a considerable reduction of the salary, which was a sufficient proof that the Government had turned its attention to the subject. He was not, however, prepared to give a specific answer to the question of the hon. Member, nor could he see, that the subject was so pressing as to call upon him to bring it particularly forward that night.

Mr. *Cobbett* said, he did not know by how much the salary of the Chief Justice of the Court of King's Bench had been reduced, but it ought to have been reduced to the standard which prevailed before 1795, for it had been raised, in consequence of the depreciation which had subsequently taken place in the currency. It was then 4,500*l.* and it had since been raised to 10,000*l.* The salaries of police Magistrates, too, deserved consideration. These were originally fixed at 300*l.* a-year, and were now 800*l.* He should like to know what that increase had been for?

He should like to be told why they might not be brought back to 300*l.*? It was by such reductions throughout the establishments of the country, that the noble Lord could alone expect to reduce the expenditure of the country to the means of the people. This was what they expected, from the Reform Bill, which would be of no use to them unless it produced economy.

Lord *Althorp* stated, that, in 1795, the Judges were in possession of saleable patronage, attached to their office, on which they now no longer had any claim; and it was in remuneration for their loss of that patronage that their salaries had been raised. It should be remembered, that unless the Government paid well, it could not command the services of the ablest lawyers.

Mr. *Hume* wished to ask the noble Lord, whether at present the number of Judges was not too great? That number had been increased some time ago because the Judges had too much business to perform, and he understood that at present there was not sufficient employment for the original number of Judges?

The *Solicitor General* begged to say, in answer to the question of the hon. Member, that he could assure him as far as regarded the Court to which he (the Solicitor General) belonged, that there was sufficient work there for all the Judges in it; and that, in fact, he believed there was no portion of the labouring classes in London—such as porters, and other hard-working individuals—so severely worked as were the Judges of that Court. He believed, that the other Judges in Westminster-hall were also completely employed, though he could not speak so positively upon that point, as he did not practise in their Courts. With regard to what the hon. Member opposite had said as to the salaries of the Judges, he could assure him, that the office of Chief Justice of the King's Bench was not near so valuable now as it was forty or fifty years ago. That office had been since stripped (he was ready to admit most properly stripped) of such a quantity of valuable patronage — the office of chief clerk, for instance, amongst others—that it was by no means so valuable now as it had been formerly. Under such circumstances an adequate salary must be attached to the office. It would have been much better for the present Chief Justice of the King's Bench to have accepted the office upon its ancient footing than with the salary at present attached to it.

Mr. *Harvey* did not know how it might be in the Court of King's Bench, but he believed that there were other Judges not fully employed. He had hoped that one of the improvements to be introduced by that Commission over which the hon. and learned Solicitor General so long presided, would have been to marshal the different causes that were set down for trial before the different Courts. For instance, the 500 or 600 causes that were waiting to be heard in the Court of King's Bench might be spread over the Court of Exchequer and the Court of Common Pleas. At present, while some of these cases must wait a year to be tried, some of the Judges were idle. He thought that an officer should have been appointed whose business it should have been to marshal these cases before the different Courts. The Judges were all equally good, and he could not conceive why the cases should not be sent to them indiscriminately. As to the salaries of the Judges the question was not whether the Judges were paid as much or more than other men, or more than formerly, but whether good Judges could not be got for less than 8,000*l.* a-year. He would undertake to say, in opposition to the noble Lord, that high salaries did not secure great talents. On the contrary, in proportion as an office was highly paid, it was in general inefficiently filled. It was imputing to the gentlemen of the legal profession an insensibility to all other motives than those of pecuniary interest. He would, however, undertake to say, that the greatest lawyers at all times had been men who thought more of the dignity of their profession than of its emoluments. When it was said that good Judges could not be got unless they were paid very high, he asked, was the honour and dignity of the situation nothing; or were they entirely lost sight of by all the Bar at the present time.

The *Solicitor General* said, with regard to what had fallen from the hon. member for Colchester, as to sending causes by rotation to the three Courts of common law in Westminster-hall, that that suggestion had certainly been maturely and deliberately weighed by the Commissioners for inquiring into the state of the law. Though it was an extremely plausible one, there were a great many strong objections to it. The Judges were no doubt all equally good, but then the merits of all were not the same, and it was thought that it would be extremely hard that a man should bring his cause into Court and not know before whom it was to be tried. There was nothing at present to prevent individuals from bringing their causes into the Courts of Common Pleas and Exchequer. He was surprised to hear from the hon. Gentleman, that there was so little business just now in the Court of Common Pleas. This he (the Solicitor General) could state, that there were at present as many *remanets* in the Court of Exchequer as in the Court of King's Bench. This he could promise the hon. Gentleman and the House, that any measure the object of which would be to facilitate and render cheaper the administration of justice should have his cordial support; and he believed it would have the support of the profession to which he belonged. The House, when it was considering the salaries of the Judges, should bear in mind the innumerable evils that would follow the appointment of a bad Judge, such as new trials, arrests of judgments, &c. He did not pretend to say what ought to be the amount of the emoluments attached to such situations, but he was sure that the House would see that they always should be such as to command the services of the best men in the profession.

Mr. *O'Connell* thought that none but practical men could be good Judges, and it would be obvious that they could not be selected from men of small practice. With respect to the marshalling of causes hitherto, if one Court was overburthened, they should be transferred to others. With respect to plaintiffs choosing their own Court, that was at least a hardship upon all the defendants. He remembered a Court in Dublin, before fees were abolished, in which there was a considerable fee upon the record; and in that Court seventy-three plaintiffs out of seventy-four gained their causes. Of course, they all carried their causes to that Court. If any newspaper in Dublin had mentioned that circumstance at the time, it would have been prosecuted. He hoped the time was not far distant when local Courts would be established, not confined to a paltry 20*l.*, but enabled, like the old county Courts, to take cognizance of any cases to any amount. He hoped, also, to see in those Courts that the first witnesses called should be the plaintiff and defendant, even although that would go far to destroy the emoluments of the profession to which he had the honour to belong.

Mr. *Charles Buller* thought, good Judges might be got without such very large emoluments. It would be, in his opinion, an improvement, if there was not so great a difference as at present, between the salaries of the puisne Judges and of the Chiefs, which made all the clever men avoid accepting the former, in the hope of getting the latter.

Sir *Matthew White Ridley* could not concur in the remarks made by the hon. member for Colchester, that eminent men were induced to look for high situations on the Bench merely from pecuniary motives. He did not see that they deserved such a stigma, when it was well known that many of them were making, at the Bar, double the sum that was paid as salary to a Judge. Mercenary men were not likely to do so. They could not expect to get the ablest men for Judges, if they did not give at least as high salaries as those men would make by following their profession at the Bar.

SUPPLY—NAVY ESTIMATES.] The House went into a Committee of Supply upon the Navy Estimates,

Sir *James Graham*, in proposing the first vote for the expense of the Admiralty, said, that he felt great pleasure in announcing to the House, that, notwithstanding the reduction of 7,000*l.* which had been made under this head last year, a still further reduction of 17,000*l.* was made in the present Estimates, together with the sum of 5,000*l.* arising from fees, which had been altogether abolished; thus showing a reduction under this head during the last two years of not less than 29,000*l.* He had also the pleasure to inform the House that the balance-sheet for the last year was now upon the Table of the House. It would show that the estimates for the last year had not been exceeded; but, on the contrary, that there was a considerable balance remaining out of them. The right hon. Baronet concluded by moving, that the sum of 104,070*l.* should be granted for defraying the salaries of officers, and contingent expenses of the Admiralty for the year 1833.

Mr. *Hume* said, that as the House had already decided upon the amount of men to be employed, which involved the general question of reduction, he would not trouble it by calling for a division upon any of those resolutions. The right hon. Gentleman had certainly made a great many reductions. The changes had been so great, and the consolidations so numerous, since the right hon. Gentleman had come into his present office, that it was impossible to say exactly what would be the result of the whole; but, as far as they went, he was inclined to believe that they would be useful. The amount of reductions effected was, he admitted, very considerable. The general scale of reduction, however, adopted by his Majesty's Government in the different establishments of the country was much too contracted. The noble Lord opposite must have recourse to much more extensive reductions. Such was the opinion of every individual with whom he (Mr. Hume) conversed upon the subject. Indeed, none but those individuals who were connected with the Government seemed to think it possible to keep up the existing establishments. As the House had already decided as to the number of men to be employed, it would be doing no good to endeavour to cut off this or that vote in the Estimates.

Sir *James Graham* said, as far as the number of men were concerned, a large majority of the House had already declared it necessary. The amount of the forces must always be guided by the circumstances in which the country was placed. He hoped that next year the necessity for keeping up so large a force would not exist. The hon. Member was exceedingly desirous to guard Government against an increase of expenditure; but he would beg to remind that hon. Member, that, excluding the half-pay, and those items over which his Majesty's Government had no control, there had been a decrease in the last two years of not less than thirty per cent in the expense of the effective service, and that service, he believed, was more efficient than before.

Resolution agreed to.

The next Resolution was, that 21,725*l.* be granted to his Majesty to defray the salaries of the officers and contingent expenses of the Navy Pay Office.

Mr. *Hume* asked, whether the expense of sending money to the outports could not be saved? He saw, in the estimate, a charge of 275*l.* for messengers accompanying the money to the dockyards. Of that he did not complain so much, but there was a further sum of 2,000*l.* charged, which he considered as so much money wasted. The marines were paid by bills, which the different bankers paid, and he did not know why the seamen could not be paid in the same manner.

Mr. *Poulett Thomson* had given the subject his best attention, having once supposed, like his hon. friend, that a considerable saving might be made; but he found that the business was now carried on at the cheapest rate possible. The bankers would not undertake to send the money unless a deposit was placed in their hands, and a commission given them. If, indeed, the Bank of England had any branch banks at the outports, the business might have been easily arranged. In the Act establishing the branch banks of the Bank of England, a clause was inserted forbidding these branches from making any payments, except where the branch was actually established. There was a branch at Exeter, but there was none either at Portsmouth or Plymouth; and therefore it was impossible to make an arrangement such as he had contemplated.

Mr. *Hume* wished to know how the business was done now? Were notes or gold sent down to pay the seamen?

Mr. *Poulett Thomson:* Both notes and gold were sent.

Mr. *Hume* thought, with the large balance which the Government had in the hands of the Bank of England, means might be found to pay the seamen without the expense of remitting the money. He supposed, if 20,000*l.* were lodged in the hands of the bankers at the out ports, they would undertake to provide the money whenever it was wanted.

Mr. *Poulett Thomson* would not like to trust the bankers.

Vote agreed to.

The next Resolution was, that 22,109*l.* be granted to his Majesty to defray the salaries of the officers and the contingent expenses of the scientific department of the navy.

Mr. *Hume* thought that this was the opportunity he ought to take to bring the case of the students of naval architecture before the House. The returns, however, which he had moved for had been so recently completed, that they were not yet printed. He therefore was not able to lay the case of the young men, who he thought had been very hardly treated, fully before the House. He would only say, that while other nations were diligently making a progress in naval architecture, we seemed to be retrograding. Other countries thought it necessary to keep up their scientific establishments, but we were destroying ours. He thought at least, that the men who for twenty-six years had been bred up to this profession, who were not only good practical shipbuilders, but well acquainted with all the science connected with their profession, he could not help thinking that it would have been wise to have formed such a body of men into a small board, rather than break up the establishment altogether. At present no plan was followed in building our ships, but one was built or altered according to the whim of one man, and another was built or altered according to the whim of another man. There was no principle whatever followed in building our ships, because we had not one system of education and one mode of instruction.

Sir *James Graham* said, that after the best information they could obtain, the Board of Admiralty thought the most proper course to pursue was to appoint men who united scientific knowledge with practical experience. He could assure the hon. Member, that measures would be taken to give the public all the information which might be laid before the Board of Naval Architecture.

Mr. *Hume* was desirous of knowing explicitly whether Captain Symonds's plan had been successful or not? He understood that the *Vernon*, which had been built on the principles suggested by that officer, had turned out a complete failure. It was now two years and a half since the experiment had been tried, and it was only right the public should know whether or not it had answered the purposes it was designed for.

Sir *James Graham* answered, that as far as the Board of Admiralty was advised upon the subject, the superiority of the *Vernon* and of all the other vessels built under Captain Symonds's superintendence to vessels built upon any other system was remarkably great. The officers appointed to try their efficiency had reported those vessels to be of extraordinary strength and power, with all the good qualities of the lightest vessels.

Captain *Dundas* declared, on the authority of Sir Francis Collier, who commanded the *Vernon*, that the experiment had fully succeeded.

Vote agreed to.

On the Motion that 114,970*l.* be granted for salaries of Officers and expenses of Naval Establishments,

Mr. *Hume* objected to the Captains-Superintendants of the Dock-yards of Pembroke and Woolwich receiving pay in addition to their pay as captains of yachts.

Sir *James Graham* said, if there was one thing more than another for which he might take credit, it was his endeavour to reduce the expenditure for the royal yachts. One of these was constantly at Pembroke, the other at Woolwich, and the captains of each did full and active duty as Superintendants of those yards. [Mr. *Hume:* Are there only two royal yachts?] There were formerly five. One of these, which had been usually at the service of the Lord-lieutenant of Ireland he had wholly done away with. Two were afloat at the command of his Majesty, and he did not think that the House or the country would object to his Majesty, who had been bred up in the navy, having two vessels for his sole use. The other two were, by the arrangement he had alluded to, no longer sinecures, but tributary to the public service.

Mr. *Hume* said, then there were, in fact, still four yachts. He freely admitted the propriety of placing two at the disposal of his Majesty, but the other two should, in his opinion, be put down.

Sir *James Graham* said, that, from the time of William 3rd. to the present day, there had never been less than four royal yachts. George 3rd., when at Weymouth, had always three in immediate attendance upon him. He (Sir J.) thought it right to keep up the number of four, that the other two might be ready if they were ever wanted.

Mr. *Hume* said, they should be kept up, not on the ground of usage, but for the purpose of use. Why had they applied schedules A and B to certain boroughs? Because they did not want them. Yet usage might, on the same principle, have shielded those boroughs, as now it was advanced to uphold these yachts. He was sorry to hear such reasons adduced for maintaining what the country did not require.

Resolution agreed to.

On the Question that a sum not exceeding 438,426*l.* be granted to his Majesty for the wages of artificers, &c. employed in his Majesty's naval establishments at home,

Mr. *B. Carter* stated, that he had a petition in his possession from a number of the inhabitants of Portsmouth, complaining of the hardships to which the artificers of Portsmouth Dock-yard had been subjected, by the discharge of a great many hands, by the degradation of many who had acquired a certain rank in the yard to an inferior rank, and, above all, by the employment of convicts in the yard. He was happy to hear that his Majesty's Government intended to correct the last-mentioned evil; and he trusted that the intention would be carried into effect with as little delay as possible; for nothing could be more irksome to honest and free men, than to be associated in labours with persons of so different a description.

Captain *Dundas* observed, that the attention of the House had been for many weeks called to the misery of the people of Ireland. That misery was at least equalled, if not exceeded, by the misery of the inhabitants of a district not four miles from the metropolis; he meant Deptford; where, in consequence of the number of artificers who had been discharged from the King's yard, the Poor rates had been raised to 18*s.* in the pound.

Sir *James Graham* observed, that the predecessors of the present Ministers had fixed upon 6,000 as the number to which the artificers in the various Dock-yards might be reduced. After having been three years in office, his Majesty's present Government had felt it their painful duty to make this, almost the last saving in the way of reduction, of which the naval department was capable; and had thought that the time had arrived when they might discharge 500 artificers, reducing the number from 6,500 to 6,000. It should be considered, however, that the sum saved, namely 37,000*l.* was spread over the whole of his Majesty's Dock-yards. That it fell more heavily on Portsmouth Dock-yard than on any other was owing to the circumstance that almost as many labourers were employed in that yard as in any other two yards in the kingdom. He was happy to confirm the statement of the hon. member for Portsmouth, that his Majesty's Government were of opinion, that the employment of convicts in the Dock-yards might and ought to cease, both with reference to political and as moral considerations. It appeared, that the demand for labour at Van Diemen's Land was so great that this step might be taken without difficulty; and he spoke upon this subject the opinion both of his noble friend, the late, and of his right hon. friend the present, Secretary of State for the Colonial Department. Time, however, must be given for the arrangement. If the convicts were all removed at once, the sudden demand for labourers in the Dock-yards would create an inconvenient rise in the price of that labour. Another difficulty in the arrangement was caused by the consideration, that many of the convicts had already gone through the greater portion of their time, and that, in such cases it might be desirable to allow them to complete their time in the yards. He would, however, undertake to say, that no fresh convicts should be sent there. He had to add, in making the reductions, care had been taken to keep the most efficient men.

Vote agreed to.

On the Question, that a sum of 63,700*l.* be granted to defray the expense of new works and improvements in the Dock-yards,

Sir *James Graham* said, that he wished to call the attention of the Committee to this vote, the decision of which would, in fact, involve the question what should be the future outlay of the Breakwater at Plymouth. The late Sir John Rennie had recommended that the work should be finished with solid masonry; that recommendation was adopted by his son, and the Admiralty, after having obtained every possible information on the matter, supported the recommendation. The last winter had afforded a severe trial of the efficiency of the work, and he was happy to say, that the result was perfectly satisfactory. He had received a letter upon the subject, and should beg leave to read a few lines to the House. The writer stated, that although it had blown a hurricane during the past week, such as had never been equalled since the disastrous gale of November, 1824, all the vessels in the Sound had ridden it out in safety, and the work itself had suffered very little damage. Only a few stones had been thrown over to the Northern side. All that part of it which had been finished in solid masonry was left uninjured, and the few stones which had been swept off were removed from that part which had not been so finished. He wished only to add now, that to the immortal honour of Sir John Rennie, the sum required for the works would fall short of the estimate he had sent in. That estimate amounted to 1,200,000*l.*, but the expense amounted only to 1,100,000*l.*

Mr. *Hume* thought, that if the work was to be finished, the sooner it was finished the better; for that would be sounder economy than leaving it uncompleted for a long period. If it could be finished better with solid masonry than in any other manner, he should not oppose its being so finished; but he thought it should be done without further delay. He wished to know on what principle it was, that Deptford Dock-yard was to be put down, and new Dock-yards at Sheerness and Pembroke were to be built? He did not understand this mode of proceeding. Sheerness was at a considerable distance from the metropolis, and in an exposed place, and he wished to know why the public money was to be expended in the erection of a Dock-yard there?

Sir *James Graham* said, that if the question was now for the first time to be discussed, whether or not there should be a Dock-yard at Sheerness, he might possibly be found to agree with the hon. member opposite; but as 2,000,000*l.* had already been spent upon this work, and as the money now required to finish it was comparatively small, he recommended that it should be finished, in order to prevent the utter wasting of so great an outlay. As to Pembroke Dock-yard, he thought that a most fit place to select for such a purpose; for the depth of water was considerable, and the wages were low, and there were many things that rendered it a proper place for the building of ships. By having these two Dock-yards, he should be able to do what he had long wished, to know exactly the comparative expense of building and of repairing ships, because the two sorts of works, and consequently the two sorts of accounts, would be kept perfectly distinct.

Vote agreed to.

On the Question, that 871,858*l.* be granted for the half-pay of the Royal Navy and Marines,

Mr. *Hume* objected, on the ground that gross extravagance was committed in that department of the public service in consequence of no care being taken to place persons enjoying half-pay upon full pay when additional officers were required for the active service of the Navy.

Captain *D. Dundas* was surprised at the remark just made by the hon. member for Middlesex. In his opinion, the recommendation of the hon. Member was anything but judicious; and there was no one, he was sure, in that House, who had the slightest acquaintance with the naval service, who would not be ready to testify to the fact, that sufficient justice was not done to the naval service. There were many officers of the navy who had served thirty and forty years, who had not above 3*s.* 6*d.* a-day, and he referred to the case of the pursers as one in point.

Admiral *Codrington* said, this was a subject to which he had paid great attention, and he must say, that the most rank injustice was dealt out to all classes of half-pay officers in the navy. There was no other class in the country so badly provided for. The allowance which was given to pursers was a disgrace to the country. They were a body of men who filled most arduous situations, and were sometimes necessarily intrusted with the most important secrets; yet the allowance, after thirty years' service, was only 3*s.* a day. With regard to the treatment of other retired officers of the navy, it was scandalous; and he could adduce instances of service and sufferings that were remunerated by stipends which would not be offered by any gentleman to his servants. He knew one instance of a person who had received several dangerous wounds, amongst which was the loss of an eye, and the allowance for all those sufferings was only 6*d.* a-day. One person who had served under himself at Navarino lost an eye there, and his remuneration was 2*l.* The fact was, there appeared to be a systematic attempt to put down the navy. If there were any such intention, he thought it but right that all other pensions, as well as those of the navy, should be abolished. He would mention several other instances in which injustice was done to the navy. There had been several petitions presented from men who served at Navarino, and who lost every rag of their clothes in that action, but they received no remuneration or gratuity. There was one general petition in their behalf, forwarded to Sir John Gore, who, by order of his present Majesty, then Lord High Admiral, presented it to the Admiralty, and strange to say, when he inquired for that petition, on his return from the Mediterranean, it was not to be found. It had never been heard of at the Treasury, nor was it to be found at the Admiralty. He could not avoid saying, that there appeared to have been a determination to inflict every injustice on all those who had served at Navarino. When he came to make a comparison between the pensions granted to officers of the navy, and those granted to other persons, the injustice done to the navy was still more manifest. He saw by the Pension List, that 500*l.* a-year was given to Mr. Thomas N. Holmes, a young gentleman, with whose services to the State no man was acquainted, whilst the oldest Captains in the navy had not more than 250*l.* a-year as a retired allowance. Sir Benjamin Hallowell was an officer of the most distinguished merit, who served under Nelson, and he now received 750*l.* a-year, whilst a retired Secretary received a pension of 2,000*l.* a-year. He would go through the list of such discrepancies were it not that that he should tire the House. He remembered that when the navy used to be paid in Bank-notes, a ship would be ordered off immediately the men received the money, perhaps to Gibraltar, where the one-pound note passed for only 14*s.*, and thus the seamen were most shamefully defrauded of one-third of their pay. He had himself received his quarterly bills on foreign stations in dollars reckoned at more than 9*s.* each, whilst at the same time the army was paid in dollars taken at only 4*s.* and a fraction. In every point the navy had been treated in a manner disgraceful to the country. There was another hardship with respect to widows' pensions. Officers were made to contribute 3*d.* in the pound out of their pay towards the Widows' Pension Fund, whilst their widows were refused all benefit from the fund unless they could swear to their possessing no other property. He complained likewise, that where such men as boatswains had served meritoriously afloat, and were afterwards employed in the dock-yards, the two services were not allowed to be taken conjointly in order to make out a period which would entitle them to a pension. He conceived that the Foreign Enlistment Bill was a great injustice to the navy, for why should not seamen and officers be allowed to employ their professional skill, or pursue their avocation where they pleased, and for those who were willing to reward them? He did not see why officers who had no employment at home should be prevented from entering foreign service, and learning their trade as shoemakers, as other persons were allowed to do. Instead of injuring the British navy, it would greatly benefit it. He was glad that the convicts were at last to be removed from the dock-yards, for respectable men felt themselves degraded in being obliged to work in company with such characters. He could not conclude without drawing a comparison between the pay of Commissaries of the army, and Pursers in the navy. A Commissary-general received 1*l.* 9*s.* 3*d.* *per diem*, a Deputy Commissary-general received 14*s.* 8*d.*, an Assistant Commissary-general 7*s.* 4*d.*, and the Deputy Assistant Commissary-general 4*s.* 11*d.* *per diem*. Now, the senior Purser of the navy had been made in 1777, and received no more than 5*s.* a-day; the senior Purser made in 1799, received but 4*s.* a-day; and other Pursers made in 1808, received but 3*s.* a-day. These were inconsistencies disgraceful to the country, and which ever way he turned, he found the navy always dealt more harshly by than any other service.

Mr. *O'Dwyer* also objected to the system upon which the navy was governed, and could say, from his own knowledge, that the complaints of the gallant Admiral were well founded. He was sorry to see an indisposition in the Government to relieve the country of the half-pay paid to officers who had rendered no services, and performed no duties whatever. Promotion was given entirely to young men of aristocratic families.

Sir *James Graham* would challenge the closest investigation into the promotions of the navy, since he had had the honour of being placed at the head of the department. He decidedly agreed with the gallant Admiral, that promotions must be held out as a stimulus to the profession, and that they were at once the cheapest and most honourable mode of procuring and rewarding services. Government, however, was placed between a cross-fire, for, whilst the hon. member for Middlesex attacked it for want of economy, another party assailed it for carrying economy too far, in withholding promotions and rewards from the naval service. He would say, that so far from the Admiralty having any objection to naval officers entering the merchant service, the fact of a person having so served would rather be considered as a claim to attention and favour. He must assure the gallant Admiral, the member for Devonport, that the fullest consideration had been given by the Admiralty to the memorial from Navarino. It was in the power of the gallant Officer to bring the subject before the House, when he should be prepared to state the grounds of the refusal given by the Admiralty to the prayer of that memorial. With respect to the case of the Pursers, he begged to remind the gallant Admiral, that a Purser of a first-rate ship was in the receipt of an income of 900*l*. a-year, which was much larger than any income received by a Commissary-general.

Vote agreed to.

The House resumed.

Police Offices (London).] Mr. *Lamb*, in moving the second reading of the Bill, stated, that its principle object was to consolidate former Acts relating to the Metropolitan Police. There were some alterations, however, introduced into this measure, which it was his duty shortly to advert to. In the new arrangement which was proposed, economy was an object of much consideration, and, with a view to diminish expense, it was thought that one of the Metropolitan Police-offices might be got rid of. It was supposed that the Whitechapel-office could be spared with the least inconvenience, and therefore a clause had been introduced into the Bill for doing away with that office. He understood, however, that the abolition of the office had excited some discontent amongst persons residing in that part of the metropolis, and as his Majesty's Government had no other object but to render the police establishment as efficient as possible at the least possible expense, if it was felt that the abolition of the Whitechapel-office would produce any serious public inconvenience, he had no disposition to press it. It was proposed to have one Magistrate at each of the Police-offices, but in effecting that arrangement some difficulties had presented themselves. In the first place, it was found that in some cases it was necessary, under Acts of Parliament, that convictions should be made by two Magistrates. Upon looking into the law, however, he found that the principle had been so little attended to, that he could see no objection to the introduction of a clause empowering one Police Magistrate to convict. It was also an objection, that when one Magistrate had to discharge the duties of the office, he could not be expected to give night attendance, and this would give additional power to the police Inspectors, under whose authority innocent persons might be incarcerated for the night. He felt this was an objection to the proposed arrangement, but, upon reflection, he did not think that it could lead to much practical inconvenience, for he understood that, in the City of London the attendance of the Magistrates at night was dispensed with without any inconvenience or complaint. The present Bill also introduced some regulations for oyster-shops selling soda and ginger-beer, which were put under the same regulations as beer-houses with respect to the hours of opening and closing. He should only detain the House to add, that as the Metropolitan Police Act was nearly expired, he hoped that no unnecessary delay would be thrown in the way of the present measure. Any suggestions for its improvement it would be his duty to attend to when the measure was in Committee.

Mr. *Hawes* was glad to see, that the design of the Bill was to introduce economy into the police system. He would not object to the second reading of the Bill if the hon. Member would consent to have a Committee appointed to consider the institution of the police generally.

Mr. *Lamb* had no objection to have a Committee appointed, but he thought that, as its inquiries would take up a long time, it would be better to defer it for the present Session. At any rate, he hoped that the present Bill would be suffered to pass before the Committee was appointed.

Mr. *Hawes* would trust entirely to the hon. Member's promise of having a Committee appointed to inquire into the subject, and hoped that some fresh measures of police would be founded on the Report made by that Committee. He would not, therefore, oppose the second reading of the present Bill.

Mr. *George Frederick Young* wished to know if the Lambeth-street Office was to remain or not? If it was not, he had a few observations to make in opposition to the present Bill.

Mr. *Lamb* said, whether that office was to be dispensed with or not, would be determined afterwards.

Bill read a second time.

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HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, April 16, 1833.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a second time:—Mutiny.

Petitions presented. By Lord SUFFIELD, from fifty-one Places; by the Earl of MORLEY, by the Earl of ELDON, by the Earl of ALBEMARLE, by the Marquess of LANSDOWN, by the Duke of RICHMOND; and by Lord BALTIMORE, from a great many Places,—against Slavery.—By the Bishops of St. ASAPH, BANGOR, LONDON, and LICHFIELD, the Earl of ROSEBERY, the Duke of SOMERSET, Viscount MELBOURNE, and Lord BEXLEY, from a Number of Places,—for the Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By the Earl of ROSEBERY, from Dollor and Lorn, against the present System of Church Patronage in Scotland.—By Earl DIGBY, and by the Bishop of LICHFIELD, from four Places—against the Sale of Beer Act.—By the Earl of MORLEY, and the Bishop of LONDON, for a Factories' Regulation Bill.

SUITS AT COMMON LAW.] The Order of the Day for the Second Reading of the Bill, intituled "An Act to Diminish the Expense, and Prevent the Delay of Suits in the Common Law Courts at Westminster" having been read,

Lord *Wynford* said, that in moving the second reading of the Bill which he had brought into the House, he should not have troubled their Lordships with many observations, had he not been given to understand that it was to be opposed by two noble and learned friends of his, for whose judgment he had so much respect that he would not venture to stand up against them, had he not authority greater than that of his noble friends to support him. He had the authority of their Lordships: for the Bill had twice passed this House. He had the authority of one of his noble opponents (Lord Lyndhurst), for he was on the Woolsack when it passed the first time,—must have known of it,—and did not oppose it,—and could not, therefore, have had any objection to it. The Bill passed a second time since his noble and learned friend, now on the Woolsack, came into office: he could have had no objection to it, for he gave it no opposition. Indeed, his noble friend introduced the clause to which his other noble friends most object, into his Local Judicature Bill. He had further to observe, that when he first introduced this Bill into their Lordships' House, he sent one copy of it to each of the learned Judges; two of these learned Judges suggested alterations which he adopted, and these formed parts of this Bill. From the others, he had heard nothing,—he presumed they had no objection to the Bill. If any objection had occurred to them, civility to a retired Judge would have induced them (if they had no higher motive) to state to him that objection. His learned and excellent friend, Mr. Justice Gaselee, suggested to him some amendments, as did also his late noble friend, Lord Tenterden. All their Lordships knew the great learning and ability of that excellent Judge, whose loss to the administration of justice it would be difficult to supply; but only such as had the advantage of knowing him in private life, were aware of the timid caution with which he proposed or assented to any alterations in the law,—yet, on his introducing what he considered a necessary security against the power of examining parties being abused, (namely, the requiring that no such examination should be had without the consent of the Court,) he gave his consent to the Bill. In what quarter the new light had risen which now guided his noble friends, he did not know. He had had a longer acquaintance with the Courts of Westminster than any noble Lord now present, except his noble friend near him (Lord Eldon); he had seen more of the practice of Courts of Common-Law than he had; and he was convinced, that until this measure, or something like it, became the law, we might boast of the excellence of our laws, but we should pay, for obtaining the assistance of those laws, far beyond what, in ordinary cases, it was worth. The cost of the remedy made it worse than the endurance of the disease, and he had known suitors ruined by the expenses of a cause in which they had been successful. This Bill was entitled a Bill for Diminishing Expenses, and Preventing Delays in Suits of Common Law. Now, if this Bill were calculated to attain those objects, there could be no valid objection urged against it. Both the evils which this Bill was designed to remedy notoriously existed. Formerly it was thought, that law could not be too expensive; now a very different opinion prevailed, and very justly. The Bill was calculated also to prevent litigation; and he believed, were it to pass into a law, it would have the effect of preventing nine cases out of ten from going to trial, while in the tenth case it would cause the expenses to be diminished one-half. When he first meditated bringing in the Bill, it was his intention to introduce a clause in it with reference to special pleading, and reduce it to its ancient limits, so much inconvenience had been experienced from the present practice; but, in consequence of the recommendation of the Common Law Commissioners, who had suggested a measure, having that subject in view, he had abandoned his intention, and had not embodied the subject in any clauses of the Bill now before the House. The House had already dealt with that subject in a Bill which had been recently introduced and discussed. The next cause of expense, after pleading, was the bringing up of witnesses at the assizes to prove facts which ought not to be disputed, and which would not be disputed hereafter, if his Bill were made law. The first clause of that Bill enacted, 'that any 'plaintiff or defendant in any action might, 'with leave of the Court, or some Judge 'thereof, at any time after service of the 'writ, deliver interrogatories to the opposite party or parties, for the discovery of 'any fact or documents material to the 'support or defence of the suit, or to the 'proving or reducing damages, either on a 'trial, or on the execution of a writ of inquiry, and might require such opposite 'party or parties, by notice in writing, to 'be examined on oath before some Commissioner, to be appointed by the Chief 'Justice or Chief Baron of the Court in 'which the action shall be brought, on 'such interrogatories.' In the former Bill which he (Lord Wynford) had introduced, his noble friend, the late Lord Tenterden, had suggested the alteration, making it incumbent on the parties to obtain the consent of the Court in which the action was brought before the parties should be subjected to the interrogatories. He thought the alteration proposed by that eminent man was beneficial, and therefore he consented to it. With respect to the principle of examination proposed by this clause, there was nothing in it but what already existed in another Court—the Court of Chancery. When information was wanted which the parties themselves could alone supply, it was usual to file a bill of discovery; and, if the other party also wanted information from the one opposing, a cross bill was filed. But this was an expensive process, costing not less than about 200*l*., and the object of his Bill would be attained by a very trifling expense indeed. He would give to the Common Law Judges all the powers which a Court of Equity upon this subject enjoyed. He would have the Common Law Judges invested with the power of protecting witnesses circumstanced as the Bill contemplated. The power of the party interrogating, it was, however, proposed should be limited. A clause in the Bill enacted 'that no party interrogated 'should be obliged to answer any question, 'or produce any document, which should 'have a tendency to prove any criminal 'charge, or to subject him or her to any 'penalty, or to affect any estate or interest, 'the title to which was not in dispute in 'the cause; nor to compel any purchaser 'or mortgagee, after such purchaser or 'mortgagee should have sworn that he or 'she had, *bonâ fide*, paid a full and 'valuable consideration for the purchase 'or, *bonâ fide*, lent a sum on mortgage, 'without any knowledge of any defect in 'the title of the premises bought or mortgaged, to disclose the title of such purchaser or mortgagee.' The clause also gave the Court the power of imposing such conditions on the party interrogating as would prevent an improper use being made of the examination. It was very important that sometimes the plaintiff or defendant should be examined; and in numerous instances, where cases such as he had described had been brought in the Court of Chancery, the facts so disclosed were all that were required for obtaining justice. Who was it knew all the facts of the case? The plaintiff and the defendant; if, therefore, they were examined, all the facts would come out, and upon them the Court might pronounce judgment. He appealed to the noble Lords who were conversant with Chancery practice, whether cases were not often tried in Courts of Equity in which there were no witnesses but the plaintiff and the defendant? The whole case as to the facts being thus opened to both parties, there would be no occasion for them to go to trial at a ruinous expense to both parties. It would frequently happen that all the facts necessary for the final judgment would come out on the examination of the plaintiff and the defendant. Now, he proposed, that if there were no additional facts to be made out on either side, the Judges should be empowered, after that examination, to give judgment at once. But, if either party should suggest that there was an additional fact to be established, then an issue should be sent down to try that fact, and that fact alone; and then, when that fact was added, the Court should proceed to give its decision. Concealment of facts too often led to a denial of justice; but truth had nothing to fear from a full exposure. Attorneys too often took advantage of their clients; and when actions were terminated, it was not unusual to hear attorneys say, "if you had told me what facts have been now proved, I should have dissuaded you from pursuing the cause." But how often did it happen that, notwithstanding the disclosure of the facts of the case by the parties litigating, actions were not abandoned! He really believed that many solicitors advised actions merely for the purpose of putting money into their own pockets, although they were aware it was done at the expense of their clients. If the Bill which he had the honour of introducing were adopted, it would prevent such actions from being brought to trial; for the disclosure of facts would make the parties acquainted with the weakness or strength of their cases; and this was similar to what took place in what were called "The Courts of Conciliation" which existed in Denmark. In this respect also it was similar to the principle adopted by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack in one of his bills which had been introduced to the House. He proposed, also, that if after his examination was closed a plaintiff or a defendant, who had no just ground of action or of defence, should persist in maintaining the action from a love of litigation, he should be compelled to give security that he would pay all the costs which his love of litigation occasioned to his opponent. But it might be objected to if there were no appeal, and, therefore, he had introduced a clause by which the orders of the Judge might be reviewed or altered by the Court to which he belonged, and the party placed in precisely the same situation he was in before such order had issued. There was, as the law stood, an unwillingness to admit facts, lest the parties should be prejudiced thereby. This would be obviated by the present Bill. Where the facts were admitted, by the Bill now before the House, and the case turned upon a question of law, then a special verdict should be taken, and the case argued before the Court. By this Bill, all means of delay, all chicanery would be got rid of, and as under this alteration of the law, the defendant would not be able to evade judgment, he thought that it would be only fair to arm the Court with power to extend to him time for satisfying it. He proposed that the Court, on receiving security, should be enabled to suspend the execution of the judgment for three months. By another clause of the Bill it was proposed to enact, that the attorney or agent of the plaintiff should deliver to the Sheriff's officer executing the writ, a particular of the plaintiff's demand, "specifying the amount of the debt or damages, or a description of the lands, tenements, or hereditaments, or goods or chattels, for the recovery of which the action was brought." The Court had, by another clause, the power to require the plaintiff or defendant to put in bail for the payment of the costs of the action, if, after reading the examination of the parties, it should appear there was either no good cause of action, or defence. These were the principal points of the Bill, which he now hoped would receive the approbation of their Lordships;—and the noble and learned Lord then concluded with moving "that the Bill be read a second time."

Lord *Lyndhurst* had listened with all the attention and respect to which his learned friend was uniformly entitled, to the observations with which he had introduced the Bill then under their Lordships' consideration; but he frankly confessed at the outset, that he felt it to be impossible for him to give such a Bill his assent. His noble and learned friend stated, that he had reason to think that the measure, as it then stood, would meet with the approbation of the fifteen Judges. And though, as their Lordships would be aware when he reminded them that yesterday was the first day of term, he had not had a sufficient opportunity of ascertaining the opinion of those learned and eminent persons, he yet knew enough of it to say that it was not favourable to his noble and learned friend's Bill. On subjects of legislation, he was, he acknowledged, not disposed to urge their Lordships to attach any very great importance to what might be the opinion of the Judges, and he should, therefore merely content himself with stating the fact, that they were not favourable to the measure; and if his noble and learned friend supposed they were, he was labouring under a most erroneous impression. Many of those learned persons, in common with himself, entertained a very strong objection to the practice of plaintiff and defendant having the power of mutually putting interrogatories to each other, though, doubtless, nothing could seem more plausible than a proposition for effecting a change of that nature in the administration of justice; but his noble and learned friend, when he adopted that principle, found it necessary to introduce certain machinery for the purpose of carrying it into effect; and when their Lordships took the trouble of examining what that machinery was, he had no doubt they would find it so complex and so imperfect, that, instead of accomplishing the objects which his noble and learned friend had in view, it would rather have the effect of increasing both delay and expense—ay, increasing them one hundred fold. In considering a measure of that nature, it was most material that they should look to what the state of the law really was at the present moment; he meant, of course, not the general condition of our whole system of jurisprudence, but the state of the law in reference to the power possessed by plaintiff and defendant of putting interrogatories to each other. At present, as was well known to every lawyer, parties to a suit could file Bills of Discovery. What were Bills of Discovery? Nothing more or less than a series of interrogatories; and what did that amount to, but the possession of the power which the present Bill assumed not to exist; the power by which parties were compelled to answer all the questions put to them, and to answer them fully. Now, he should be glad to learn in what respect did the proposition of his noble and learned friend go to effect any improvement? He wished to know what difference it made whether those interrogatories were put and answered in one Court or in another—whether in a Court of Law or a Court of Equity? It had been said, that the expense of filing a Bill of Discovery was not less than 200*l.*; that certainly was a most extravagant description of the expenses necessary. [Lord *Wynford* had known Bills of Costs, in cases of Bills of Discovery, amount to 200*l.*] The whole costs might have been swelled to that amount, but it certainly must be considered an extravagant description, and he must be allowed to say, that his noble and learned friend had not taken the proper pains to inform himself upon the subject to which his Bill related. One of the principles for which his noble and learned friend appeared to contend, was the vast advantage of *vivâ voce* examinations. He had always imagined that the chief advantage derivable from *vivâ voce* examinations arose from the persons examined being brought into the presence of the Judge who was to decide the question at issue. But that was not what the Bill before them would accomplish. It would do no such thing. The parties examined under it would be heard before Commissioners in the country, for in every case it was provided that the Commissioners empowered to examine the parties would be required to go within five miles of their residence. The parties were obviously not bound to answer upon interrogatories in all cases, and a difficulty immediately suggested itself, how far that exemption from answering was to extend. It was proposed to put it entirely under the control of the Commissioner, although the present practice in the Court of Chancery, in this respect, had been the result of the closest attention by the Judges of that Court to that subject, and a series of decisions in Courts, for the greater part of 200 years past. Having entered so far on the subject as to his objections to the principle of the Bill, he should now direct their Lordships' attention to the machinery of the Bill, or the mode by which, practically, it was expected to bring the provisions of the Bill into operation. It was by this Bill provided that, in all cases where the party required to be examined was out of the jurisdiction, a Commission may issue to examine him. That examination and these answers must afterwards be sent up to the Court here. When they arrived here, a question probably would arise whether the party answering had fully answered, which, as the learned Lord on the Woolsack had learned, was but too frequently a subject of doubt in his Court, with all the skill and caution which was used in those examinations there. Then, again, it was observable that, by the Bill, the party interrogated, his Counsel, attorney, or agent, might object to the sufficiency or relevancy of any answer before the Commissioner, and the sufficiency or relevancy of the answer may be supported by the party, his Counsel, attorney, or agent. Here was a fine project for shortening delay and saving expense, which the Bill asserted was its object in the outset. Well; the question being mooted—the argument concluded, the examination decided—of what value was that decision? None; for in the same section the noble Lord provides that his decision, even on the minor points—the mere sufficiency or returning of an answer—shall not be final; the decision being subject to review by any Judge of the Court, or by the whole Court. Here was a fruitful source of expense—fees, costs, and delay. The very orders of a Judge, too, were to be subject to review and alteration by the Court to which he belonged. Questions settled by the examiner, after deliberate argument before him, were to be referred, in many cases, the noble Lord said, to the decision of a Judge at chambers. Now, all in that House who had ever attended a Judge at Chambers must know what chance there was of a calm decision of any matter of intricacy in the hurry and confusion incident to such a jurisdiction. Again, in cases of dissatisfaction with the decision, the party might appeal from the decision. Then all hitherto done was abortive, for a second set of interrogatories might be had, and all the proceedings was to begin over again. In a Court of Equity a party not sufficiently or satisfactorily answering might be punished by attachment at once. Now, he would ask which of the two modes was better calculated to effect the ends of justice? But the noble Lord's Bill provided that in case of any default of a party to be examined, a judgment might be assigned against him. Even this judgment was not to be final: it was merely to be a general or interlocutory judgment—a writ of inquiry of damages must issue; and this, forsooth, was the remedy for delay and unnecessary expense the noble Lord proposed to substitute for the existing mode of getting at a disclosure from interested parties in the suit by means of the equity proceeding by bill and answer. This well-known mode of proceeding now in use he fearlessly pronounced to be far more complete, sufficient, and satisfactory, as well as attended by much less expense than that to be introduced by the Bill now before them. He objected to it because of its defect in principle, as well as because of the cumbrous nature of its multiform machinery, which he feared much would, upon the pretext of various attendances before Commissioners and Judges, be made a pretext for multiplying costs. He objected to the clause that enacted that a portion of the plaintiff's demand should always be given to the Sheriff's officers as a needless expense. For it was not too much to assert, that nine in ten, perhaps forty-nine in fifty, causes, ended with the issuing of the writ and its execution. Why then incur so serious an expense in the very commencement of an action? He had lately seen a bill of particulars in a cause which occupied from twenty to thirty sheets. He did not say, that for such a Bill this machinery, cumbrous as it was, might not be necessary, but for that reason, if for no other, though he thought he had stated many, he believed their Lordships would best consult the interests of the public by voting with him on the Amendment. He should now propose, that the Bill be read a second time this day six months.

The Earl of *Eldon*, after fifty years experience in the profession, felt bound by a sense of duty not to let pass such an opportunity of recording his dissent from the doctrines laid down by his noble and learned friend, by whom the present measure was introduced to the notice of their Lordships. He objected, at the outset, to the proposed plan of examining plaintiff and defendant; and doing that, he felt it to be almost needless to urge any other objection; he would, however, object to the present alteration, on the ground that it tended towards an intermixture of the proceedings at Common Law and Equity. It had, hitherto, been considered one of the greatest merits of which the English law could boast, that Equity and law were kept distinct. There had been something said about the expenses to which attorneys sometimes put their clients; it was not for him to estimate those expenses, but he did remember a Judge, who, while at the bar, never once mentioned attorneys otherwise than with the most perfect respect, but who, the moment he attained to the Bench, never mentioned them without censure; he did not allude to his noble and learned friend by whom the measure was introduced. He entertained not the slightest doubt that the present Bill would lead to increase the expense and delay of law proceedings.

The *Lord Chancellor* said, that he must confess he agreed in some measure with those noble and learned Lords who were of opinion that the Bill now before their Lordships went too far. But that was an objection rather to the details of the Bill, which might be amended, than to the Bill itself. He was not prepared to say at this moment, that he should go the length of voting against the principle of the Bill, and throwing it out at once. On the contrary, he was rather inclined to think that it might be advantageous to let the Bill go into the Committee, where the objections to its machinery might be considered and removed. It might be fit and proper thus to give the noble and learned Lord the opportunity of amending the measure. Such being his general view of this question, he should only observe, that with all due deference and respect for the learned Common Law Judges, they were not exactly the best persons to decide what was fit to be done in Equity; and that though, generally speaking, he should say that their authority was great and overpowering when it was in favour of any measure for the alteration of the practice in their Courts, yet, although it was still to be listened to with reverence, it was not when opposed to such alterations, to be deemed of such overpowering weight. That arose, no doubt, from their excusable wish not to sanction changes that were not absolutely necessary. With reference to the present Bill, he thought that upon the whole, it would be the most advisable course, especially as a Bill of a similar nature had twice before passed this House, not to agree to the Amendment, and throw out the Bill, but to allow it to go into the Committee without pledging the House to any particular course afterwards with respect to it.

Lord *Wynford* said, that if there were objections to the machinery of the Bill, though he by no means admitted their justice, he was bound to say in his own defence, that that machinery was the work of the Common Law Commissioners—it was not his. That part of the Bill had been recommended by them. He was, therefore, entitled to say, that the Judges were in favour of it, for most of them were now Judges. He did not wish to interfere with the Courts of Equity, but to enable the Common Law Courts to do their own business, and he denied that the plan he proposed would increase the expense to the suitor. On the contrary, if that which now required the suitor to go into a fresh Court, could be done in the Court in which the action was already pending there would be a great saving of expense.

The Amendment agreed to, and Bill to be read a Second Time this day six months.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, April 16, 1833.

Minutes.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of Mr. R. Steuart, Accounts of the total Sums levied by the Commissioners of the Northern Lights, in the years ending 30th June, 1831, and 1832, respectively, and of the Expenditure of the Commissioners during the same period.—On the Motion of Lord John Russell, an Account of the Receipts and Expenditure in the Office of Paymaster General, from the 1st of January, 1832, to 31st of March, 1833, and the same on account of previous years.—On the Motion of Mr. Lynch, a Return of all Persons Imprisoned for Debt, or who have taken the benefit of the Insolvent Act, or against whom Commissions of Bankruptcies have been issued, in each of the three years last past in Ireland: also a Return of the Number of Masters, with their Salaries, and Scholars at present in the Schools, called Erasmus Smith's Schools, in Ireland, &c.: also an Account of all Sums of Money advanced by Government since the year 1821, for Public Works in the Town and County of Galway and Mayo, and of the manner in which such Sums have been Expended.—On the Motion of Mr. Hume, an Account of all Sums of Money received by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests from the Lessees of Lighthouses in each year since 1800, and how the Money has been applied.

Petitions presented. By Mr. Methuen, from the Clergy of Wilts; and by Sir Robert Inglis, from the Clergy of Surrey; and from a Place in Ireland,—against the Church Reform (Ireland) Bill.—By Mr. Blamire, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Hurst, Mr. Staveley, Mr. Sheppard, Mr. Philpotts, Mr. Throckmorton, Mr. Houldsworth, Mr. Methuen, Mr. Charles Buller, Mr. Wason, Mr. Childers, Lord Dalmeny, Sir William Chaytor, Sir James Graham, Sir Eardley Wilmot, Captain Elliott, and Viscount Howick, from a great Number of Places,—for the immediate Abolition of Slavery.—By Mr. Jervis, from Bedford; by Mr. J. C. Dundas, by Lord Howick; and by Lord Charles Fitzroy, from several Places,—against Corporation Abuses.—By Mr. Ewart, from Liverpool, for the Abolition of Flogging; and from the Dissenters of that Place, for Removing the Disabilities of the Jews.—By Mr. Hawes, from Lambeth, to the same effect.—By Mr. Hardy, and Mr. Craven Berkeley, from four Places,—in favour of a Factories' Regulation Bill.—By Mr. Parrott, Mr. Hardy, and Viscount Howick, from several Places,—for a Removal of the Disabilities at present affecting the Dissenters.—By Colonel Lygon, from Bewdley, for a Repeal of the Sale of Beer Act.—By Mr. Fysche Palmer, from Retail Dealers and Brewers in Reading; and by Mr. Hume, from Paddington, against any Alteration of that Act.—By Mr. R. Oswald, from Hand-loom Weavers of Glasgow, and its Neighbourhood; by Mr. J. Maxwell, from Pollockshaws; and by Mr. Hume, from Newton, near Ayr, for a Board of Trade, and for Relief.—By Mr. J. Maxwell, and Mr. Stewart Mackenzie, from three Places,—against the present System of Church Patronage in Scotland.—By Mr. Philpotts, from Gloucester, for a Repeal of the Assessed Taxes.—By Sir Robert Ferguson, from Londonderry, for Providing Counsel to Prisoners tried for Felony; and against additional Duty on Timber brought from the British Colonies; and from the Cess Payers of Donaghadee, for an Alteration in the Grand Jury Bill.—By Mr. Hardy, Mr. Halford, Mr. Trevor, Mr. J. Maxwell, Mr. Parrott, and Mr. E. Tennent, by Captain Elliot, and Lord Dalmeny, from a Number of Places,—for the Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By Mr. Charles O'Connell, from a Place in Ireland, for the Abolition of Tithes.

Juvenile Offenders.] Sir *Eardley Wilmot* rose, to move for leave to bring in a Bill to alter and amend so much of the 7th and 8th of George 4th, c. 28, as related to proceedings in indictments against offenders previously convicted of felony; also to alter and amend so much of the 7th and 8th of George 4th, c. 29, as related to proceedings by indictment against persons under seventeen years of age charged with simple larcenies. By the 7th and 8th of George 4th, it was enacted, that when a prisoner was indicted a second time for felony, upon proof of the former conviction, the Court might order an increase of punishment—namely, transportation for fourteen years, or for life. When the clerk of arraigns read the indictment to the Jury, in which there were two counts, the one stating the former conviction, and the other the charge to be tried, the Jury acquired a previous knowledge of the accused being an old offender; and such knowledge prejudicing him in their minds, he might be convicted, not so much for the offence for which he was then taking his trial, as for the offence for which he had already suffered punishment. Now, it was a principle of law, that no man should be tried a second time for the same offence; and the jury being sworn "to give a true verdict, according to the evidence," it followed, that the previous knowledge of the Jury was injurious to the prisoner, and militated against his having a fair trial for the offence on which he was then arraigned. He proposed that the count, stating the previous conviction of the prisoner, should not be read to the Jury till after their verdict; when, if it were a verdict of "guilty," proof might be given of the previous conviction; such proof never having been intended to affect the verdict of the Jury, but only the sentence of the Court after conviction. The second object of the Bill however, was of much importance; and he had no doubt would receive the attentive consideration of the House. In his judgment, some change of the law, as it related to juvenile offenders, had become absolutely necessary. The number of such cases had of late years, greatly increased. It appeared from the Returns on the Table of the House, that a large proportion of the convictions were of persons under twenty-one years of age. These juvenile offenders were first taken before a Magistrate, and then committed to prison to await their trials. That mode of dealing with them was attended with great expense to the public; but the worse consequence was, that, by remaining so long in a prison, as they frequently did, between committal and trial, these youthful offenders were exposed to every sort of contamination from the society of some of their fellow-prisoners; and their morals often became so utterly depraved, from this cause, as to render their future improvement, and their subsequent return to good conduct, and their duties to society, almost a hopeless matter. They came out worse than they went in; and thus the great end of punishment—the prevention of crime—was, in their cases, signally defeated. He would not enter into any details, but would merely allude to one instance, in order to show the effect of the early imprisonment of children for trifling offences. In the county which he had the honour to represent, considerably more than half the criminal offenders were under twenty-one years of age; and, during the last seven years, 1,300 individuals had been tried, who were under the age of eighteen; and of these one half were under fifteen years of age. A great portion of them were kept in prison from six weeks to two months, to await their trials; so that, in fact, punishment was inflicted on them before conviction. The system of punishing boys who had done acts of mischief (for a great number of these delinquents had no idea of committing felony), by indiscriminate imprisonment in common gaols, instead of keeping them on bread and water, and in solitary confinement, for a limited period, or of otherwise punishing them in a summary and judicious manner, was highly objectionable. Boys being sent to gaol, for they hardly knew what, soon became corrupted and depraved; their sense of shame was destroyed; and they were converted into hardened offenders. It was unnecessary to state, that the only objects of punishment are the prevention of crime and the reformation of offenders; and if those objects were not accomplished, and if punishments, instead of doing good, increased the evils which they were intended to remedy, there could be no doubt that the system was radically wrong. Such was the case with respect to our treatment of juvenile offenders. It was the object of the Bill to remedy this defect. Instead of allowing boys of tender age to be taken before Magistrates—for petty larcenies—to be bailed, or in default of bail sent to gaol, and then tried and imprisoned on conviction, he would have them brought at once to the Petty Sessions, there to be tried by the Magistrates, and summarily punished or discharged, as the case might require. If committed to a house of correction, care ought to be taken of the classification and the religious and moral instruction of youthful offenders. He should have no objection to have a Jury to assist at the Petty Sessions, if it should be thought necessary. If this, however, should not be thought desirable, in order to prevent convictions for felony without the intervention of Juries, it would be proper that many of the crimes now classed as felonies should, when committed by youths, be treated as misdemeanors. This alteration in the law would remove the objection which existed to dealing with such offenders without the intervention of a Jury, and reconcile the mind to summary convictions before Magistrates. The hon. Baronet concluded by making the Motion above specified.

Mr. *Lamb* did not intend to oppose the Motion. He thought the first object which the hon. Baronet had in view was already attained, because the second count in the indictment was seldom read to the Jury, and because Judges did not in the first instance tell the Jury to find whether a prisoner had been before convicted [*Cries of "the Jury knew it"*]. He agreed it was not right a Jury should be prejudiced by having that knowledge; and if the hon. Baronet could succeed in preventing the Jury from knowing that a prisoner had been before convicted, he should be glad. With regard to the second object which the hon. Baronet had in view, it was certainly very desirable that boys not hardened in crime should be spared the contamination of the associates they usually met with while waiting in gaol to take their trial; but he confessed that he saw great difficulty in the hon. Baronet so framing this Bill, as not to let young experienced thieves, bred up in crime from their cradles, escape. If that were suffered, as it was well known that many boys in London were very experienced thieves, they would escape punishment; and it was of urgent necessity that boys nursed up in the career of crime should not escape punishment under the pretext of their age. There was a great difficulty in fixing the age of what were called juvenile offenders. Should it be under ten, or fourteen, or sixteen? The Committee which had sat on this subject had found it surrounded with difficulties. If the Bill were brought in, it might certainly, under proper management, tend to check crime. He looked upon the object of the hon. Baronet as most desirable, though he doubted if it were easy of execution.

Sir *Thomas Freemantle* supported the Motion. The present system was only fitted to entrap a Jury into a verdict of guilty. He had been a member of that honourable House when Mr. Davenport had introduced his Bill on the subject, and had then supported his propositions. As to the establishment of a separate jurisdiction for the juvenile offenders, he thought the great evil of it would be, that a lighter punishment being by law awarded to persons under a certain age, experienced thieves would, in place of committing depredations themselves, employ those young persons, to the great injury of public virtue. There was a great difference between juvenile offenders in large towns, such as London, and in the country districts; and he thought it would be advisable to give Magistrates the power of summary conviction with regard to boys who should be brought before them in the country. He was ready to admit, as he had already said, that the case was different in towns. The great object was to guard against the contamination of these young offenders in gaol; and he thought that might be effected.

Sir *Oswald Mosley* supported the Motion. As Chairman of the Staffordshire Quarter Sessions, he knew that one half of the offenders who were brought before him were under the age of twenty-one. It was totally impossible, even under the best system of gaol discipline, to keep the juvenile prisoners apart from the more practised offender. At Stafford they had instituted a school for the purpose of instructing the young culprit, but the effects of the instruction were soon wiped out by the company they kept. It was sad to see the trifling offences for which children were exposed to punishment. He remembered the case of a boy who was committed to gaol for stealing three eggs, and he was kept two months in prison before he was tried, and then, for this petty offence, he was exposed to all the solemn proceedings of a public trial. He wished that a distinction were made by the law between large and small felons.

He wished also that the hon. Baronet had proposed to draw a distinction between minor and greater offences, and to give the Magistrates power to try the minor offences in Petty Sessions. That would be of great use in preventing crime, and would save expense to the country. He would give, if it were necessary, the Magistrates in Petty Sessions the power to summon a Jury like the Coroners. With a Jury of that kind, the Petty Sessions would be as competent to try the minor offences as the Quarter Sessions. He would, however, give the criminal the option to be tried before the Magistrates alone, or before the Magistrates and a Jury.

Mr. *Cobbett* said, that he would at present give no opposition to the bringing in of this Bill; but that, in every future stage of it, if it extended the power of the Magistrates, or went further to diminish the use of the Trial by Jury, he would divide the House upon it, even if he stood alone. The use of the Trial by Jury had been going on lessening and lessening by degrees during the last forty years; and a bare enumeration of the instances in which by law it had been dispensed with during that period would shock the two hon. Baronets who had spoken in support of this measure. If they should endow Magistrates with the power of trying felonies without the intervention of a Jury, who would then say that they should not hang also without a Jury? [*No, no.*] Gentlemen may say "No" to that proposition, but some years ago who amongst them would have believed that Magistrates would have got the power of inflicting punishment in so many instances as they now possessed it? Magistrates now inflicted forty times as much punishment as the Judges of the land; and let them bear in mind who those Magistrates were. He spoke with every respect of the two hon. Baronets who had addressed the House upon this subject, he did not take them into consideration when he spoke thus; but there were different Magistrates in the country from them. A great proportion of the magistracy of the country consisted of clergymen of the Church of England, who were looking for preferment; of officers of the army and navy, who were looking for promotion; and of officers upon half-pay, who would not wish to be scratched out of the half-pay list by doing anything displeasing to the Minister of the day. In fact, a great portion of the magistracy consisted of the most dependent men upon the face of the earth. The hon. Baronet should take that fact into his consideration when he proposed to give the Magistrates the power of summarily disposing of offenders without the intervention of the Trial by Jury. The independence of the Judges was the constant boast of Englishmen; that the King himself could not displace the judges was a remark repeatedly in the mouths of the people of this country. But just look to the Magistrates, and behold the contrast! The Magistrates were nominated at the pleasure of the Minister of the Crown, they held their situations at the pleasure of the Minister of the Crown, and many of them could have their bread taken from them by the Minister of the Crown. They were, in truth, as dependent a set of men, generally speaking, as breathed the breath of life, and yet it was to such men that these powers of summary conviction were proposed to be given. He should be ashamed to sit there as a Representative of the people of England without protesting against such a measure. He should have had no objection to the measure if the hon. Baronet proposed a mitigation of the punishment of young offenders, but then as the hon. Secretary opposite had truly observed, there was the difficulty of discriminating between offenders. It was well known that some boys of five years old were as quick, and as great adepts, as other boys at ten years of age, and that boys of ten years of age were often as accomplished, and indeed more accomplished thieves than other offenders who were ten years older. It was, in fact, impossible to provide for the varieties presented by human nature. He repeated that he would oppose the measure in all its future stages.

Mr. *Hardy* supported the Motion. He complained of the attack which the hon. member for Oldham had made upon the general body of the magistracy of England. That hon. Member had spoken of officers of the army and navy and of clergymen of the Church of England who were Magistrates, as if they were ready to sacrifice the ends of justice to the basest and most interested purposes. It was too much to hear such an unjust attack made upon them in that House. He was acquainted with many clergymen of the Church of England, and with many officers of the army and navy who were Magistrates, and he would say this for them, that he never saw men who were more disposed to do their duty firmly and impartially, with as much regard for the interests of justice as the hon. Member himself could possibly evince, and without any of those base ideas of promotion or preferment from his Majesty's Ministers which that hon. Member had attributed to them.

Mr. *Cobbett* said, that he did not pretend to say, that Clergymen of the Church of England, and officers of the army and navy were worse than other men, he had only contrasted their dependence with the independence of the Judges. In doing so he meant to cast no imputation upon them.

Mr. *Charles Buller*, in illustration of the trifling offences for which boys were committed to gaol in the country, mentioned an instance which occurred at the Assizes for Devonshire last summer. A boy was committed for stealing a mackerel, whose imprisonment and trial cost the county 40*l.*, and yet when he was convicted the Judge sentenced him to only one day's imprisonment. He stated that he knew of another case, where two boys who had stolen a few potatoes on a Sunday out of the open window of a storehouse, and had roasted them at an adjoining lime-kiln, were taken up, and brought twenty miles to the county gaol. They were afterwards tried and convicted, and those boys, both before and after their conviction, were confined amongst a parcel of felons, some of whom were in prison for an offence that he would not name. Would not a jurisdiction on the part of Magistrates to try such petty offences with the assistance of a Jury, remedy such evils? He certainly should, with the hon. member for Oldham, object to the taking away the Trial by Jury in any case, and the Magistrates might be empowered to empanel a Jury for the trial of such trifling offences as he had alluded to. The retaining the Trial by Jury in such cases would gratify the feelings of the people, and would in every respect promote the ends of public justice.

Mr. *Lloyd* said, that in no case of misdemeanor, much less in a case of felony, should a Magistrate have the power of summarily convicting without the intervention of a Jury. The honest and well-founded prejudices of the people of England would not endure a contrary practice. He would suggest the propriety of referring the subject to a Committee up stairs, who should examine the whole question of secondary punishments. The question was one which had attracted attention lately, not only in this country, but across the Atlantic.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, he was sorry to take up the time of the House, but every alteration whatever in the law was, in his opinion, of the greatest importance. He could not, therefore, allow the subject to pass without protesting against the deprivation of the juvenile offenders of the benefit of Trial by Jury. He was friendly to the principle of inquiring into the previous character of prisoners. Nothing could be of more importance than to impress upon persons the idea that character constituted a species of castle. In his opinion, many of the proceedings on criminal trials were the most farcical that could easily be imagined. Nothing, for instance, could be more ridiculous than the scruples which were made about allowing a prisoner to convict himself. The prisoner, in his opinion, ought to be called upon to explain any circumstance which might appear by the evidence to be of an equivocal nature. Lord Mansfield deserved great credit for the good sense of his remarks upon the subject. He hoped he should live to see the time when every criminal should be interrogated as to the particulars of the transaction respecting which he was accused. He would not advocate the subjecting of a prisoner to any duress, to any imprisonment, to any torture, in order to extort a confession from him; nor would he desire that a prisoner should, as in a neighbouring country, be subjected to all the ingenious cross-questioning on the part of the Judge, which was usual in a case conducted by counsel; but nothing could be more preposterous than the caution frequently given from the Bench to a prisoner, not to criminate himself. Instead of using every method in order to reach the real facts of the case, it was not unusual, upon a prisoner pleading guilty, for the Judge to point out to him the favourable point in the evidence, and to advise the prisoner to withdraw his plea, and take the chances of a trial. He had known that caution given in the case of a very bad murder. The criminal took the Judge's advice, and was successful in obtaining a favourable verdict; but he died in prison. There was also too much delay before trial. The whole system of criminal trials required revision; and the basis of the reform should be to make them come on more rapidly, and to get rid of those foolish scruples, which operated as a protection to the guilty.

Mr. *Ashford Sanford* only wished to defend the Magistrates from the attacks of the hon. member for Oldham. In the cases which had been referred to they were, under the existing state of the law, obliged to commit the offenders for trial.

Lord *John Russell* was perfectly sensible of the evil which resulted from sending juvenile offenders to gaol, where they were brought into contact with the more experienced criminals; but he could not make up his mind to dispense with a Trial by Jury as a remedy for the evil. He had always considered the Trial by Jury as the most valuable protection of the subject, and he objected to abolish it in any case, lest that should be made a precedent for taking it away in others. He, therefore, would not give his support to the Bill in its future stages, unless that part of it which proposed to invest Magistrates with the power of summary conviction were expunged. At the same time he wished it to be understood that he did not participate in the sentiments of those who attributed to the Magistrates a harsh and an oppressive exercise of their authority; on the contrary, he thought the conduct of the Magistracy was generally lenient, and characterized by a leaning towards prisoners. It was notorious, for instance, that they carried to the utmost extent the erroneous practice of not interrogating prisoners or calling upon them to tell their own story. He remembered once, a prisoner who was on his trial for sheep-stealing, being asked whether he had any question to put to his master, who had given evidence against him, replied, "All I have to say is, that I am sorry for what I have done, and I hope my master will forgive me; and, if he does, I never will do anything of the kind again;" whereupon the Magistrates on the Bench stopped him, observing that he must not convict himself, and other witnesses were called to prove the fact which the prisoner had already admitted. He thought Magistrates ought to ask accused persons to account for their time at the period when the crimes were alleged to have been committed. With respect to the other measure, he was of opinion that the fact of a prisoner's previous conviction ought to go before a Jury. If a prisoner's character were good let him have the benefit of it; but, on the other hand, if it were bad, let it weigh against him.

Mr. *Potter* said, he had heard of a frivolous case where a boy was placed at the bar for stealing sixteen pounds of dung, and he had no doubt but that if the Magistrate had possessed the power of summary conviction, the prisoner would have been sent to the treadmill.

Sir *Eardley Wilmot*, in reply, stated that he would avail himself of the suggestions which had been thrown out in the course of the debate. His only object in introducing the measure was to do away with a notorious and extensive evil.

Leave given.

STEALING IN DWELLING HOUSES.] Mr. *Lennard*, in rising to submit his promised Motion, said, that when his hon. friend, the member for Middlesex, some weeks ago, presented the London petition for the improvement of the criminal code, they were reminded, and very properly, of the great improvement which had already been made in it. Although he fully admitted that, yet he thought it could not be denied that much still remained to be done before the criminal code of laws could be said to be in a satisfactory state. The more the public were accustomed to consider the subject of criminal jurisprudence, the more anxious did it become to remove all traces of that sanguinary character which were impressed on it in those times when, in the words of Mirabeau, "blood, and nothing but blood, and pounds of flesh," were required for every offence. He wished the Government had leisure to undertake an entire revision and reform in the criminal code. It seemed to him that such a work could be best done by the Government. But there were many Gentlemen in that House whose opinions were entitled to great authority who entertained a different opinion, and who thought that the necessary improvements in our code were best made by the exertions of individual Members bringing forward motions for such Amendments as to themselves might seem most convenient. He had therefore determined to bring under the consideration of the House the state of the law in regard to two offences, respecting which he believed there could be no doubt that the law ought to be changed. But the change he should propose was rather nominal than real. The laws denouncing punishment of death on the crimes of housebreaking with larceny, and stealing in a dwelling-house, any one therein being put in fear, had long been all but dead letters in the Statute-book. They had been for many years, and they could now be, but very rarely executed, and they seemed only to be left on the Statute-book as a remnant of the barbarism of former times. Looking at the returns, it would be seen that for the crime of housebreaking during the last seven years, out of every ninety-one in England and Wales who had been convicted, not more than one had been executed. Taking the last two years, the proportion of executions to convictions was still less. In 1831, out of 517 convictions there had been only one execution. In 1832, out of 583 convictions, there had been only four executions; and in this latter case he believed it would be found that those which were stated to be executions for housebreaking were, in reality, executions for burglary. He had been informed that this was the case, on authority in which he placed the greatest confidence. Now, during the same two years in London and Middlesex, although there had been 122 convictions for this offence, there had not been one execution. It was true, that it was stated, that in the year 1832 one execution had taken place, but that was a mistake. The execution alluded to was that of Drewitt, and his offence was certainly not housebreaking, but burglary. Of the other offences, namely, robbery, &c., no distinct mention was made of it in the returns, but he supposed it was included under the general head of larceny, &c. And with respect to that offence, what did the returns show? Why, that out of 867 persons convicted of that offence in England and Wales, fourteen only had been executed. In 1832, out of fifty-nine persons convicted, none were executed. In 1831, out of 113 who were convicted, only one was executed, and so on. Again, in London and Middlesex, during the last three years, there had been but one execution; and during the two years preceding the last three years, there had been but one execution in each year. Here, then, was expressed, in the strongest possible manner, what Beccaria called the tacit disapprobation of the laws in the non-execution of them. If in the time of Sir Samuel Romilly it had been admitted to have been a grave charge against our laws that not one in twenty of the persons convicted were executed, what could be said of a law of that sort where not one in ninety sentenced to die was executed? In such a state of things it seemed absurd to pretend that the law could be any terror to evil doers. The criminal, where the chances were so greatly in his favour, was sure to calculate on the chance of escape. But such a state of the law was a terror to the injured and the innocent. Those who had made inquiries into the subject knew that when, in cases of that sort, the law was allowed, as it was said, to take its course, the sure result was to make many persons more unwilling to prosecute than they were before, to increase the number of acquittals, where there were prosecutions, and consequently to bring about that state of things so well described by the present Archbishop of Dublin, who said, that he met with instances in his own neighbourhood of persons of the best character not only refusing to prosecute, but labouring in every way to promote the escape of the guilty because the law denounced death against the offences, and they could not bring themselves to incur even the remote and almost imaginary risk of exposing a thief to that fate. He held in his hand some tables which proved, beyond all possibility of contradiction or doubt, the fact of the unwillingness of Juries to make themselves instrumental in giving effect to the sanguinary enactments of our code. Anything on this subject, he was aware, might be looked upon as a work of supererogation, so well ascertained was the fact; but it was so clearly and unanswerably established by these tables, which had been drawn up with great care and labour by Mr. Wrightson, formerly a Member of that House, that he was really anxious to trouble the House with them for a few minutes. A comparison was made of the total number of acquittals on capital charges with those on non-capital charges, during the seven years ending 1831, from which it appeared that in England and Wales the centesimal proportions of acquittals to commitments on capital cases were twenty-eight, while on non-capital charges the acquittals were only ten, the difference between the two being ten. Thus in England nearly eleven more out of 100 committed for trial were acquitted on capital than on non-capital charges. Again, in London and Middlesex, it appeared the centesimal proportions of acquittals to commitments in capital cases was forty-four; ditto, in non-capital cases, twenty; the difference being twenty-four. Why was this? If they looked at the number of cases in which executions took place in London and Middlesex, and compared them with the number in England and Wales, the cause would be apparent. In England and Wales five out of every 100 were executed; in London and Middlesex ten were executed. The greater probability that the last penalty of the law would be inflicted in the latter case made Juries more reluctant to convict, as had been observed by Mr. Wrightson, the author of those statements. Again, they had tables giving the centesimal proportion of executions to convictions, and the centesimal proportion of acquittals to commitments for the crimes of robbery, burglary, and housebreaking, in England and Wales, and in London and Middlesex. The first table was for England and Wales, the second for London and Middlesex; embracing a period of twenty-one years, from 1810 to 1830. Looking at the first table, it appeared that, throughout the whole of that period, in England and Wales, the executions for robbery had been much more numerous than for the other two crimes in the table. The acquittals for robbery had been much more numerous also. In the first period the proportion of executions to convictions had been—for robbery, fourteen; for burglary, thirteen; for housebreaking, three. The proportion of acquittals for the same offences had been as 36, 27, 22; for the second period the executions were as 12, 6, 1; in the third period the executions were as 6, 3, 1; the acquittals were as 37, 21, 19. Again, burglary had been punished with death less often than robbery, but more often than housebreaking. For instance, in the first period the executions for burglary and housebreaking were 13 and 3 — the acquittals were 27 and 22; in the second period the executions were 6 and 1—the acquittals were 23 and 16; in the third period, when the executions were 3 for burglary and 1 for housebreaking, the acquittals were 21 and 19. Again, comparing the second period with the first, a considerable diminution was found to have taken place in the number of executions for all the three crimes in the tables. A corresponding decrease would be remarked in the number of acquittals; in the first period the number of executions being as 33, the number of acquittals were as 85; in the second period, the executions being as 19, the acquittals fell down to 60; in the third period, the executions for burglary declined in the proportion of 6 to 3, and the acquittals for that crime declined also. The second table showed, as was observed by the author of those tables, the reluctance of Juries to convict of capital offences in a manner still more striking and more conclusive. In London and Middlesex robbery presented the greatest number of executions and the largest number of acquittals; the executions for robbery, burglary, and housebreaking being, in the first period, 5, 3, 1—the acquittals 37, 22, 18; in the second period, the executions being as 13, 8, 5, and the acquittals as 49, 34, 31. It should be observed from that statement, that in housebreaking, where there was the smallest number of executions, there was also the smaller number of acquittals, while, in burglary, a medium number of executions and a medium number of acquittals. Now, there was one other view which these tables presented. It appeared that the executions in London and Middlesex, in proportion to the convictions, were—for robbery twice as numerous, for burglary nearly three times as numerous, for housebreaking five times as numerous, as in England and Wales. What was the effect? The acquittals in London and Middlesex, in proportion to the commitments were, during the last seven years, one-third more numerous than in England and Wales, and that in each of the three crimes about 12 more out of every 100 escaped in the former than in the latter. He had troubled the House with these statements because they proved, in the clearest manner, the repugnance of Juries to find persons guilty of offences punishable with death; and he agreed with the very ingenious author of those statements, and he thought the House would agree with them, that no further proofs could be wanting. What, then, was the effect of attempting to restrain crime by punishments which the public felt to be excessive? Why, it secured impunity to crime in a great many cases where it ought to have been visited with a moderate punishment. With respect to the crime of housebreaking, the law had lately been made more severe even than it was formerly. Under the old law it was necessary that property to the value of 5*s.* should have been stolen; but by the Act introduced by Sir Robert Peel that was altered, and a stealing to the smallest possible amount constituted the capital offence. Why was that course taken? He did not recollect any reason which the right hon. Baronet gave for it. It occurred to him, that it might have been done because Juries were in the habit of finding the value of the property stolen was much less than the value required to constitute the capital offence. If this was the intention of the right hon. Baronet, he had failed, as men ever would fail who attempted to legislate without reference to the public feeling. Juries could not now secure the escape of the criminal by finding the property stolen to be of the value of 4*s.* 11¾*d.*, but they effected the same object by a verdict of stealing only. A similar failure had attended another of the enactments which formed part of the Bill of the right hon. Baronet, and he mentioned it in order to illustrate and prove the general principle which he was advocating. By the old law privately stealing in a dwelling-house to the value of 40*s.* was a capital offence. The right hon. Baronet, acting on a contrary principle to that which he had pursued in the case of housebreaking, raised the value to 5*l.* Under the old law, Juries were in the habit, in a great number of cases, of finding the property stolen under the value of 40*s.*—namely, 39*s.* And what did they do now? Why, they found it to the value of 99*s.* A great deal had been said, at different times, upon the atrocious and dangerous character of the crime of burglary; but there were two offences confessedly of much less criminality and danger, to which the law awarded the same punishment that it did to a higher and graver offence. There could not well be a stronger instance, although the Statute-book abounded with similar ones, of the utter disregard of principle in the formation of the criminal code. While it was so—while it was thus capricious, and therefore unjust—could it be expected to obtain the respect of the public, or be effective for the suppression of crime? Was it not disgraceful to the Legislature to retain the capital punishment in such cases as those where the offence was comparatively a small one, while in other states they were making the experiment whether the punishment of death might not be dispensed with altogether? A writer, speaking particularly of the prisons of Pennsylvania, said, there was the best of all evidence—demonstrative proof—that brutal treatment, hanging, and gibbeting were neither the most economical nor the most efficacious, as they were certainly neither the most humane nor the most enlightened modes of punishing crime, or reforming society. Other states had been induced to follow the example so successfully set by Pennsylvania, and up to that time with the best effect. Every one knew, too, that the punishment of death had been abolished in Tuscany for a period of twenty years. It was revived by the authority of Buonaparte, and had not since been entirely abolished, though it was very rarely inflicted. But what was perhaps not so well known was, that during a period of sixty years in that state, taking three periods of twenty years—the twenty preceding the abolition, the twenty during which it was abolished, and the twenty subsequently — fewer crimes had been committed during the period of the abolition than in either the preceding or the subsequent periods. It was one of those cases which, as a matter of history, might appear more surprising than fiction. But he would mention a case which must come home to themselves and to their own feelings. It was well known that during the time that the amiable and kind-hearted Sir James Mackintosh (a name never to be mentioned without feelings of deep regret for his loss) was Recorder of Bombay, (a period of seven years), the punishment of death was entirely discontinued. If the experiment ever was to fail, its failure might have been expected in such a place as Bombay—a crowded Indian sea-port, composed of a mixed, and even shifting population. But what was the result? It had been most successful, for Sir James Mackintosh declared from the bench in his last charge, when he was going to return to England, that the district had been governed without one capital punishment, and with no increase of crime. He, however, was not at that moment advocating any such extensive alteration in the laws of this country; all he asked was, to make the written enactments conformable to what, with a few exceptions, was the actual practice. If he obtained leave to bring in a Bill, he should propose to abolish the punishment of death altogether for these offences, and in place of death to give the Judges the power at their discretion of punishing the criminal by imprisonment or hard labour, or by transportation for seven or fourteen years, or by imprisonment and hard labour first, and transportation afterwards. He was convinced that, under such a law as that, crimes would be much more certain of being punished than they now were, which every one would admit to be the great object to be aimed at in all legislation with a view to its efficiency. No one could have looked into the subject without being aware of the great increase of crime in late years. He hardly supposed that would be used as an argument against his Motion. But those crimes had increased, not only in spite of, but, as he thought, because of, the present injudicious system of criminal jurisprudence; but, be that as it might, the fact, though to be deplored, was what no man could be surprised at. What had been done to check the increase of crime? Almost nothing. We had, perhaps, the most inefficient police in the world. It was true, that in the metropolis there was a police, founded, as he thought, on some wrong principles, being too much dependent on the Secretary of State for the time being, but still an efficient police; but, throughout the country generally, there was nothing which deserved the name of a police, and consequently one of the great means of preventing crime was wanting. Then, with respect to our gaols, we had good laws it was true, but they were, in many cases, shamefully neglected, and even in one of the prisons in this metropolis, he was told there was hardly anything which deserved the name of classification of prisoners observed in it. Again what had they done for the improvement or education of the people? So far from having attended to that subject, they had allowed a whole generation to grow up in the manufacturing towns under circumstances which made it impossible for them to obtain any mental improvement whatever. Neither should they overlook the effect of such laws as those now under consideration in demoralizing the people. He could conceive few things more prejudicial to the morality of the people, or to the interests of justice, than the practice of Juries finding what had been called compassionate verdicts in opposition to the strongest evidence, and, in other words, uttering a falsehood—committing perjury for the purpose of avoiding giving effect to the law. The Legislature had begun to alter this system, but it must go on still further. He knew the reform which he was then proposing was a very trifling one and went but a very little way towards the accomplishment of those objects, but if it was adopted it would at least cure the anomaly of treating cases of petty theft with the same severity as murder and parricide, and would enable prosecutors, witnesses, and Juries to punish guilt in many cases, which they would not do at present, without violence to their feelings and consciences. The hon. Member concluded by moving for leave to bring in a Bill for the repeal of so much of the 7th and 8th of Geo. 4th, c. 29, s. 12, as enacts, that if any person shall break and enter any dwelling-house, and steal therein any chattel, money, or valuable security, to any value whatever, or shall steal any such property, to any value whatever, in any dwelling-house, any person therein being put in fear, every such offender being convicted thereof shall suffer death as a felon.

The *Solicitor General* did not by any means rise to oppose the Motion of his hon. friend. On the contrary, no object was nearer his heart than that the punishment of death should be abolished whereever it was found practicable to abolish it; although he was not sanguine enough to believe that it would ever be possible to abolish it altogether. Crimes of violence, he feared, they must continue to be under the painful necessity of visiting with death. For murder, for burglary, for arson, for all crimes which threatened life, it seemed to him that the punishment of death accorded with the natural feelings of man. Until two years ago the criminal code of England was one of unexampled severity. But it must not be forgotten, that very important measures had been adopted for the purpose of diminishing that severity. He was happy to say, that since his Majesty's present Government had come into power, in the course of the last year, the offences of coining, of forgery, of sheep-stealing, of horse-stealing, of stealing in a dwelling-house, all of which had formerly been capital, had been made not capital offences. He felt the country was under considerable obligation to the right hon. member for Tamworth for the great efforts he had made in ameliorating the criminal code of the country; and he was glad that that right hon. Baronet was absent, as it afforded him a more fitting opportunity of expressing his sincere gratitude to him. But how it cameto pass, that the criminal law, notwithstanding a wish for its amelioration, had been made more severe upon certain points, he was at a loss to conceive. Yet so it was, that, as the law now stood, if a boy were, in passing a pastrycook's shop, to take a fancy to a bun or a cake, and put his hand through the glass of the window to get possession, that would be construed into a breaking and entering, and be looked upon as a capital felony; or, if he were to break the window with a stick, and put it in, that also would be a constructive breaking and entering of a similar description. He was glad, therefore, that his hon. friend, the member for Maldon, had drawn the attention of the House to this subject, as it was right that the law, in so far, at least, should be amended. Upon other parts of the Motion, however, he must confess that he entertained strong doubts. If, for instance, a person or persons entered a house with intent to steal, and put the inhabitants in bodily fear, who would venture to say, that that ought not to be considered a capital offence? Highway robbery was looked upon as a capital offence, and was so admitted by the hon. Member who introduced the Motion, because the party attacked was placed in bodily fear of his life. Why, then, should it not be considered a capital felony to enter a dwelling with intent to rob and place the inmates in equal fear? Upon these grounds it was, that he should, in the future stages of the Bill (should it be introduced), suggest that its provisions should not go further than related to breaking into a dwelling-house in the day time, where the parties were not put in bodily fear. He fully concurred with those hon. Members who advocated a total revision of our penal code; but he must, at the same time, point out the inconvenience likely to arise from every hon. Member taking his own view, and introducing his own separate measure for that purpose. Let the House but consider for a moment that there were at present ten notices of motions on the books for the amendment of the penal, and fifteen for revisions of the civil law of the country. Surely this was not the most effectual course of proceeding. Government were most anxious to remedy the evils which existed; but surely it was not too much to expect that time should be allowed to make that uniform revision which was considered on all hands to be necessary. If each hon. Member, acting upon his own suggestion, were to introduce his own specific mode of redress, it would be impossible that any thing like a general and uniform revision could be brought about.

Mr. *Wynn* concurred in the observations of the hon. and learned Solicitor General, and was rather surprised that they had not led the hon. and learned Gentleman to propose a Committee on the subject. For his own part, he had, for the last twenty years, been actively and earnestly engaged in endeavouring to bring about a reform in the penal laws of this country, both in and out of office. He had been a member of the different Committees obtained by Sir Samuel Romilly and Sir James Mackintosh, and had thoroughly investigated the various grounds upon which a mitigation of our penal code was sought for by both those great men. He had always thought that a different construction ought to be put upon the law relating to offences which might, with due caution, be prevented, such as robberies from the person, and others of a different nature. For instance, every person who fastened up his house in order to proceed about his lawful and necessary occupations was entitled, from the laws of his country, to the highest protection which those laws could bestow, in order that the property so left should remain uninjured. Gentlemen must know, that cases occurred in which the whole savings of an industrious life were carried off; and he certainly was afraid, unless some effective system of secondary punishment could be devised, that to abolish the punishment of death in all cases would be an incentive to robbery. He thought the offence of forcibly entering houses with intent to rob, and putting the inmates in bodily fear, should be placed on the same footing, as, doubtless, persons so placed would be likely to resist, and that resistance would lead to the loss of life on the part of the person resisting; and if so, the aggressor should be subject to the severest penalty of the law. He would not now say whether hereafter it might not be deemed advisable to substitute secondary punishment in certain cases of this description; but should such be the case, still they ought to be very cautious. He should be sorry to see the House sanctioning a Bill which went so far as this one did, at least for the present. Hereafter, when the system of secondary punishments had been more thoroughly investigated and matured, the proposed measure might be proper. They should, however, proceed gradually, and he, therefore, considered it more desirable that the House should wait and see the effect of the Bill passed in the last Session of Parliament. For his own part he should prefer the appointment of a Committee up-stairs on the subject, as it would give scope for more general inquiry and an opportunity of obtaining further information. When any hon. Member introduced a bill, no matter how limited its operation, he felt in some degree pledged and committed to it, without being able to go into the more extensive details of the general question. He hoped, therefore, the hon. Member would alter his Motion to the appointment of a Committee, which would be attended with this, amongst many other advantages, that it would give them an opportunity of obtaining the advice and assistance of the law officers of the Crown, from which the greatest benefits must arise.

Mr. *Lloyd* said, it ought not to be lost sight of—that there was a wide distinction between putting a man's life in jeopardy and taking it away, though both offences were punished with death. He was aware of the difficulty suggested by the hon. and learned Solicitor General—namely, that there were so many notices of motions on these subjects that all the good effect of revising the law was in danger of being defeated. There was one objection which he felt to this measure in its present stage. The Bill of his hon. and learned friend, the member for Liverpool, it was well known, received what was called an amendment, in another place, at the suggestion of a noble and learned Lord. Having witnessed its practical working, he was very much inclined to doubt whether it was such an Amendment as ought to induce the House to dispense with the possibility of a capital punishment, so rarely exercised. As the Bill originally stood, by the 7th and 8th George 4th, not only was breaking into a dwelling-house, and putting a person in fear, made capital, but stealing in a dwelling-house above the value of 5*l.* was also made a capital offence. By the Bill of his hon. friend, the member for Liverpool, these offences were made not capital; and it was left to the discretion of the presiding Judge whether the sentence should be transportation or imprisonment. In another place, an Amendment was introduced, by which it was made imperative upon the Judges to transport for life in all those cases, and also in cases of cattle-stealing. Now, at the last Assizes at which he attended, a trial took place, the circumstances of which were these:—A boy, tempted by an opportunity which presented itself, stole from the till of his master a sum of above 5*l.* He was detected—he did not attempt to run away—he confessed the theft, and exhibited the greatest contrition; so much so, that his master, he believed, would have taken him back: at all events, he attended in Court to give him a good character, and so did other persons. He was advised to plead "guilty"—the poor lad pleaded guilty accordingly; and the Judge was actually obliged by the Statute to sentence him to transportation for life; whereas, if the Judge had had any discretion vested in him, he would not have sentenced the lad to more than six months' imprisonment. He was well aware that, on representation being made in the proper quarter, this sentence might be mitigated, and that application it would be his duty to make; but, in a case of this kind, the usual answer was, that certainty of punishment is substituted for severity; and there was, therefore, a disinclination to do away with the effect of the punishment. The House might not be aware that transportation for life was now a very severe punishment; because there must be hard service for the space of eight years before any mitigation could take place; which made it a tremendous penalty, more especially when the Judge had no discretion, and when it was inflicted indiscriminately on every description of persons. He declared that making it compulsory on the Judge to sentence the prisoner to transportation for life excited more abhorrence in his mind even than the farce of passing sentence of death upon a number of men upon whom it was never intended to execute the sentence. Unless they could be guaranteed against a similar amendment being introduced, in the same place, in this Bill, he for one, should be disinclined to give his vote for the proposition of the hon. Gentleman, much as he, from his soul, abhorred the severity and disproportionate effects of capital punishment. The proposition of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Wynn) was, in his opinion, an eligible one. He thought that there ought to be a Board or Committee established—whether of Members of the Legislature, or others, he cared not, but of persons acquainted with these matters, who might be engaged in a revision of the whole of the civil and criminal law. By adopting that plan, they would be able to incorporate all the improvements that might suggest themselves to practical men, without the cumbersome mode which would otherwise have to be followed. It should be recollected that all the information they hitherto had on the subject of secondary punishment was of the most meagre character; that the question—important as it was—was still in abeyance; and till some positive conclusion upon it had been arrived at, he was afraid it would not be to any practical advantage that the House should legislate.

Mr. *Cutlar Fergusson* thought most of the difficulties arose from the imperfect specification of offences by our laws; and he could, on that occasion, not refrain from deprecating the mode in which the amendment of the criminal code had generally been attempted. The hon. member for Maldon was fortunate in having found an early hour of the night for the discussion; but the greater part, or even the whole, of the alterations hitherto made, were proposed at midnight sittings, or sittings after midnight. Even the great measure introduced by the right hon. member for Tamworth, by which the whole criminal law of England was altered, was a midnight measure. He would beg to suggest to the hon. member for Maldon, that, if a Commission were to be appointed to inquire into all offences against property, it would be advisable in him to withdraw his Motion for the present. At the same time he must observe, that the first part of it was so reasonable that, if the hon. Member pressed it, he (Mr. Fergusson) would support it. With respect to the law itself, he thought the invariable practice should be that a fixed and certain punishment was to be the general rule, and mercy and pardon in certain cases the exception. Upon this ground it was that he was anxious to ameliorate the law, and not let it go forth to Europe, that while we sentenced 400 or 500 persons capitally every year, yet there are no more than five or six of them found deserving of the punishment of death.

Mr. *Ewart* adverted to the observation of an hon. Member, that by a Bill introduced last year, the Judges were obliged to inflict one undeviating system of punishment. That was, however, not his fault; for though he had introduced the Bill, the clause complained of had been introduced in another place. Much had been said about the manner in which capital punishments were mitigated, and no doubt they were mitigated; but his objection was, that mitigation was left to the operation of a secret tribunal. There was not in that House, there was not in the country, a single individual who could, for a moment, suppose that this power, vested as it was in the Secretary of State for the Home Department, would be abused; but still his objection remained undiminished—the mitigation was the work of a secret tribunal, and was not the working of the law of the land. It was an arbitration that ought not to be left to any private person or set of persons. It was not to the practice, but to the principle of such a tribunal that he objected. He did not object to it because it was abused, but because it might be. The right hon. member for Montgomeryshire had said, in effect, that there were so many mitigations in our code proposed, that the number was quite startling to the orthodox maintainers of the existing law; his argument was valid, to a certain extent; but because there was a necessity for certain previous investigations, was the House, in all cases, to wait? Was it desirable that it should be considered whether some crimes were properly punishable or not? Was it to pause in abrogating those punishments which were far too severe for the crimes to which they were affixed? It was said, that the question of secondary punishments was an open question. It was true, that a gentleman had been sent to America to inquire into secondary punishments; but because he was making his inquiries, were they to wait, when a necessity had been made out—and he contended that his hon. friend had made out a necessity—for a Bill like the present? Certainly not; and he, for one, would most cordially and strenuously support his hon. friend. It had been asserted, by the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down, that the unsatisfactory definition of burglary and house-breaking was the cause of all the evils which exist. The definition of burglary, in our criminal code, was certainly a remarkably loose one, and ought not to be continued. The hon. member for Maldon, most properly, aimed at the abolition of capital punishment in the case of house-breaking; but although a man was now liable to be capitally convicted if he broke into a house by day, by this Bill the punishment would remain the same, if he committed it by night. If he did, he might be capitally punished. It had been stated by the hon. and learned Solicitor General, that if a boy stole a bun from a shop-window by day, he might be capitally convicted. If this Bill passed, however, if a boy stole a bun by night, he might be capitally executed also. This circumstance pressed strongly upon his mind the necessity of altering the definition of burglary. It had been laid down by the hon. and learned Solicitor General, as an almost unerring rule, that crimes which were accompanied by violence must be severely punished. That, to a certain extent, was true; but experience showed, that punishments of a very severe nature, though sometimes reconcilable to the feelings and habits of mankind, were of uncertain execution; and therefore the Legislature ought not to lay down strict dogmas as applicable to every possible case. The code of Draco was admired; and in much later times it was considered little better than heresy to assert that a man ought not to be hanged for horse-stealing. Might the opinions of mankind not change then, and might not less rigorous laws be adopted and approved of, even in cases of violence? There was a proof of the correctness of this assertion to be found in Belgium, where capital punishments had been abolished. The criminal law was, no doubt, admirably consolidated by the right hon. Baronet, the member for Tamworth, but it was an outline not well drawn, although exceedingly well filled up. What was the consequence? The whole of the edifice, erected with so much care and trouble, was tumbling to pieces. One hon. Member took away one brick; another, removed another; and in three or four years it would become its own dilapidated monument. The old code of criminal law was considered, in France, most severe. What had been done there? Why, that code had been mitigated to a very material extent. A learned and distinguished foreigner, who travelled in this country, had alluded, in one of his works, to the great tenderness evinced by an English Judge and Jury towards a prisoner on his trial. Whence arose that feeling? Did it not proceed from a consciousness that the prisoner was placed in an unfair position, and was not, as in other countries, fully and fairly defended? Let the Legislature do all it could for the elucidation of truth; let it be careful, however, not only to detect the guilty, but to give ample protection to the innocent. Considered abstractedly, a mild code of law was really a proof of a great and good country, because, in all countries where the law was mild, the inhabitants were also mild and civilized. This was the case in India, where capital punishments were rarely inflicted, and there the character and habits of the great mass of the people were of the most gentle description.

Mr. *Cobbett* said, that though he was unacquainted with the details of the subject before the House, it was one so deeply interesting to the people of England that he could not refrain from saying a few words upon the occasion. Every Gentleman appeared to have his own project for altering the law, and he had his, which he would state before he sat down, and which fortunately lay in a very narrow compass. There was one thing connected with this subject which excited his displeasure, he had almost said disgust, and that was the everlasting references to France and America, in order to influence the opinions of people in England, which had set an example to the whole world of framing laws for ensuring the liberties of mankind—England, which was said to have been the cradle of liberty. Why should we be always looking abroad to see what other countries were thinking of us, and to see what America, and above all, what France was doing? As to what France was doing relative to the amelioration of the laws he knew nothing, and wished to know nothing, but from the accounts which he had seen of the manner in which justice was dispensed in French courts, he would say, the Lord deliver him from French courts of justice. Hon. Members who boasted so much of the excellence of the laws in America did not seem to be aware that they were no other than the English laws. At the time the independence of the United States was established the people made a solemn bargain that they should enjoy the Common and Statute Law of England, which they claimed as their birth-right. Gracious God! under these circumstances was it not a little too much that men should go to America to learn how to make laws for this country? A cargo of law was shipped from Liverpool to America to be mixed up with the law there, but he hoped that they would laugh at the stuff when it should be brought back. He had lived in America about ten years and a half altogether, and was acquainted with many intelligent persons there, and amongst others with several lawyers, and they all concurred in stating that every departure which had been made from the law of England was a change for the worse. Now for his project for altering the law. It was this; he would go back to the period when George 3rd ascended the throne, and taking all the Acts which had been pased since that time relative to the criminal law, he would fling them into the fire. It was with surprise he had heard the Solicitor-General for whom he entertained some respect, because he believed his intentions to be good,—it was with some surprise, that he heard him talk of further mitigations of the severity of the criminal code. Much had been said, for many years past, of softening the criminal code, but he had watched the proceedings of Parliament pretty closely, and as far as related to the common people, he had seen that code at every rolling round of the sun grow harder and harder towards them. Did not the Solicitor-General know that Magistrates at their Quarter Sessions could now transport a man for seven years for poaching? To be sure the punishment of the pillory had been abolished. In a thoughtless moment the Judges sentenced a Lord to stand in the pillory. It was immediately discovered to be a barbarous and inhuman punishment,—one which could only have been thought of by our ignorant ancestors, and it was put an end to at once. Another Lord put an end to his existence, and the practice of burying suicides in cross-roads was not long suffered to continue. He was sometimes wicked enough to wish that a Lord would go out poaching, and then the cruel laws on that subject would be abolished to a certainty. Was it not monstrous that a man could be transported for seven years for being in pursuit of a hare or a pheasant, which, in law, as well as in reason, was as much the property of the poor, as of the rich [*No, no*]? He questioned whether any lawyer would cry "no," the Solicitor-General would not. He repeated that game was the property of all mankind—of the poor, as well as of the rich. There was another little law under which a man could be hanged for resisting a game-keeper; but he never heard of any attempts to mitigate its severity. A man who defended himself against a game-keeper who wished to take him, in order to have him transported for following a hare was guilty of a capital offence. This was a new law, not one framed by our ignorant ancestors, and under it no less than forty men had within the last twenty years been hanged by the nobility aud gentry of England, in order to preserve their game. Ay, let that resound in their ears when they were talking about softening the criminal code. They had not that law in America. Formerly it was a capital offence to break into a house and steal to the value of 12*d.*; that sum was subsequently raised to 40*s.*; but the persons who made the alteration did not consider the change which had taken place in the value of money, for at the time the law was enacted 12*d.* would buy two fat sheep. It had been said, that crime in this country had increased in consequence of the want of education. He had hoped never again to hear that asserted, because nothing could be more contrary to the fact. Let any person draw four columns, and set down the amount of taxes, of poor-rates, of crime, and of education at the period when George 3rd ascended the throne, and at the present moment, and he would find that they had all gone on increasing together. It was impossible for any one who did not blind himself to the fact to fail to perceive that taxation was the cause of the increase of crime. The hon. member for Maldon had talked of the want of a country police. He was sorry to hear a country gentleman utter such sentiments. At the time the hon. Member was born no one felt the want of a country police. England had for centuries mocked at the French on account of their gendarmerie, who acted as spies on the soldiers, as well as the people, and now it was proposed to introduce them here. The gendarmerie, however, did not prevent the burning of the title-deeds of the nobility, and driving them out of the country, and if Parliament did not retrace its steps the establishment of a country police and the patching up of the criminal code would not prevent the occurrence of similar events in England.

Mr. *Hill* regretted that a man of the talents of Mr. Cobbett should clothe himself in the worn-out vocabulary of prejudiced invective, so long worn only by the ignorant and the malevolent. If the hon. Member's argument was good for anything, it was for their returning *omnino* to the state of things which obtained in his lauded golden era of 1760. They should re-adopt the bloody penal code of that period; they should re-enact the capital punishments for minor offences then in force, with all the baneful consequences of such sanguinary enactments. Was the hon. Member aware that after the riot of 1780 the inhabitants of London were hanged in scores for participating in those riots. The hon. Member objected to improvements because they were brought from America and France, and the hon. Member was scandalized that an Englishman should travel out of his own country even for the purposes of improvement. He had read works of the hon. Member's in which the people had been called upon to turn their eyes to America, to France, and other countries, where everything was better than in our own. [Mr. *Cobbett*—Never!] It appeared that he had misread those works. He had no doubt that he was incorrect, that he had read them all the wrong way upwards. He had no doubt that there was not a single allusion to the cheapness and excellence of American government. Did the hon. Gentleman mean to say, that we might go across the Atlantic for one improvement, and shut our eyes to another? That we were to look for cheap Government and laws? That we were to learn one thing, and refuse to listen to anything else? The hon. Member had taken up the cast-off prejudices which everybody else had discarded with contempt; and whether the hon. Member abused the Jews on one day, or the French or Americans on another, he must say of the hon. Gentleman, with all his admiration of his talents—and no man had a greater—that he was pandering to the very worst prejudices of the lowest of mankind. The question before the House, however, from which he had wandered was the Bill brought forward so ably and satisfactorily by the hon. member for Maldon. The question was, whether or not that House was to proceed in its career of continuing the number of capital punishments, which still deformed the criminal code of this kingdom. He had observed, with only one exception, that there existed throughout that House, the strongest conviction that the crimes in our code, to which capital punishments were affixed, were still too numerous; and the only difference was, as to the best mode of getting rid of some, if not the greater part of them. There was also, some difference as to the principle to be applied as a test to this question. It appeared to him that they ought steadily to look to the principle whether or not men, abstractedly speaking, deserved capital punishment. It could not be denied that if the object of punishment was to diminish crime, capital punishments whether deserved or undeserved had not that effect; but in many instances had the contrary effect of increasing them. Let that be the test, and he invited the attention of the hon. and learned Solicitor General to it. He felt, with the hon. and learned Gentleman, as to the moral turpitude of a man who broke into a house, disturbed, alarmed, and agitated the family, and put them in fear. That was, no doubt, one of the greatest breaches of social order that could possibly be committed; and he was willing to admit, that if experience had shown that putting men to death secured the peace of society, and the absence of causes of fear and disquiet in the community at large, he should be sorry, much as he valued human existence, to repeal laws, which though they were severe, gave so much advantage to the people at large. But when he found that, in point of fact, the fear of this punishment seemed to operate more upon the minds of the Jury who were called upon to convict, than upon those who were to be convicted; and when this punishment gave a substantial privilege to those who were to be tried; he then came back to those punishments which, though not so severe in appearance, were more certain in execution—and he referred to experience in England and abroad—whether it was not better to ordain a certain small punishment, than an uncertain large one. He, therefore, certainly was anxious to support the hon. Gentleman's Bill; but he nevertheless concurred in the suggestions made by the hon. member for Stockport and others, that they ought not to confine themselves within a narrow compass. The question of capital punishments altogether was not a large one. It was one which might be disposed of by a Committee, in a short time; and therefore, he should suggest that the best mode of disposing of the question would be, to submit the consideration of the whole range of capital punishments, as applied to offences of all kinds, to a Committee up-stairs, whereby the principle might be set at rest, if not for ever, at least for a very long period; for every one must feel the great inconvenience—and he had no doubt the hon. member for Maldon felt it as much as any hon. Gentleman—of taking this great subject in small departments, and debating them night after night, when the same general principles were involved in each. He had had some experience of criminal Courts, and he was opposed to the Act brought in by the hon. and learned member for Liverpool, which took away from the Judges the discretion formerly vested in them, and made it imperative upon them to pass a sentence of transportation for life on convicting men of certain offences. In this respect the Legislature proceeded in a hasty and premature manner. They rushed from almost unlimited discretion to no discretion at all, and fixed the same punishment for offences, which were as different as possible from one another. A learned Judge had described to him the pain he felt when compelled to pass sentence of transportation for life upon a boy under the following circumstances. A man and a boy went out together, and stole a sheep. The boy was ten years of age, and clearly acted under the control of his father—not having a wife the relationship was no excuse or palliation in the eye of the law, the boy was therefore convicted—and it was the painful duty of the Judge to pass sentence of transportation for life on this miserable child of ten years old; the very same sentence being passed upon the father who was the author of the crime. He had no doubt that the right hon. Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, had mitigated the severity of that sentence, but the sentence was publicly passed, and the effect would not be easily got rid of. A public trial ought to be a moral lesson to the whole of the people; and if the feelings of the spectators were outraged by manifest inconsistencies, how was it possible that they could preserve that respect and reverence of the law which was after all, the best security for its due execution. He should support the Motion of the hon. Gentleman, though at the same time he should have been better pleased if the measure had had a broader basis, so that the whole general subject might have been settled and decided upon at the same period.

Leave given to bring in the Bill.

THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH.] Mr. *Faithfull*:* In rising to propose the Resolution of which I have given notice, I assure the House that I do so with considerable reluctance; not because I stand in doubt as to its propriety, but because I am a young Member, a Dissenter, and destitute of that talent which is requisite in order to do the subject justice. The Resolution in question will be found to contain three general propositions. 1. That the Church, as by law established, is not recommended by practical utility. 2. That its revenues have always been subject to Legislative enactments. 3. That the greater part, if not the whole, of those revenues ought to be appropriated to the relief of the nation. With regard to the fate of the Resolution in this House, I am by no means sanguine; but it will be admitted to be one of great importance, in some measure involving the interests of religion, and closely connected with the peace and prosperity of the people. To distinguish between the Church and the Establishment is by no means difficult. To the religion of the Church I am not at all hostile; but the Establishment I detest, contending that each religious sect ought to support its own ministers. Let that be done, and I shall be content. Now the, first general proposition is, that the Church, as by law established, is not recommended by practical utility. And here I would ask, "has the establishment of this nation the sanction of Christ or of his Apostles?" Let Paley answer the question. "We find in his (Christ's) religion no scheme of building up a hierarchy or of ministering to the views of human governments. Our religion, as it came out of the hands of its Founder and his Apostles, exhibited a complete abstraction from all views either of ecclesiastical or civil policy." No man who is at all acquainted with the Scriptures will be bold enough to assert that the New Testament contains a single expression calculated to lead to the conclusion that a religious establishment was deemed an eligible institution. But how was the fabric of Christianity raised? Not by means of the fostering care of secular authority, but in direct opposition to all the powers and establishments in the world; while it is well known to those who are acquainted with ecclesiastical history, that no religious establishment existed in the Christian world till the time of Constantine, when, being taken under the protection of the State, the Church immediately began to lose its purity.

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* From the corrected copy.

Now, not only is it a fact that the Establishment derives no sanction from Christ or his Apostles, but a little reflection will be sufficient to convince any unprejudiced man that it is utterly incompatible with the very essence of Christianity. What is Christianity? Is it an empty name? Is there nothing substantial or valuable in it? If that be the case, then away with it at once, and cease to pay a set of men large sums of money for the purpose of its promulgation. No! Christianity is a religion of good-will and kind affections, while our Establishment generates ill-will, heart-burnings, and animosities. Do we want proof of this? Then let us look at insulted, oppressed, impoverished, and distracted Ireland. Put down your Church Establishment there, and by means of its revenues satisfy the wants of the poor, and tranquillity will immediately be restored. But is there no irritation in England? Indeed there is, whatever the noble Lord (Althorp) and his right hon. colleagues may affect to think. The people of England are weary of the tithe system, and its doom is sealed. Did our Lord or the Apostles exact from those to whom they preached the Gospel? On the contrary, they went about doing good, and rather than be a burthen to the people, they frequently wrought with their own hands in order to obtain the necessaries of life. It is clear, then, that the Establishment derives no sanction from Christ or his Apostles, and that the system is quite incompatible with the religion we profess. In the next place, the Establishment holds out temptations to hypocrisy; and here, again, I have the authority of Paley. "Though some purposes of order and tranquillity may be answered by the establishment of creeds and confessions, yet they are at all times attended with serious inconveniences. They check inquiry; they violate liberty; they ensnare the consciences of the clergy by holding out temptations to prevarication." Is it not, I ask, a melancholy fact, that subscription tends to exclude the upright and conscientious, while it readily admits the subservient and unscrupulous?

Take a man of great learning and talent, blended with extensive zeal and piety, a man anxious to promote the honour of God and the spiritual interests of his fellow-creatures; and yet if this man cannot digest the Athanasian creed, and all the doctrines contained in the thirty-nine articles, he must violate his conscience, or be excluded from the ministry; while a man destitute of talent, zeal, and piety, a man whose god is his belly, and who glories in his shame, may be admitted to that sacred office, by saying that he believes that which he either does not believe, or knows nothing at all about. And yet this is a venerable and Christian institution! Then, again, it will not be denied, that persecution has generally, if not invariably, been the work of a religious establishment. Who was it that were the principal actors in the crucifixion of our Lord? The Jewish Priesthood. Who drenched the altars of their idols with the blood of the primitive Christians? The pagan priesthood. Who was it that subsequently stained their hands with Protestant blood? The Popish priesthood. And who, in their turn, persecuted unto death the Popish priests? Why the Protestant clergy. Yes; but then the Protestant parsons would not now be guilty of such monstrous barbarities. I, for one, will not take upon myself to answer for that. Give them as much power as they had in the time of old Queen Bess, and make an attack upon their temporalities, and I tremble for the consequences. What means the bustle which the clergy are now making for the purpose of preserving what they hypocritically call the Church? Is it that they are afraid Christianity will be swept away? No such thing: on the contrary, the whole of their anxiety is for the preservation of their revenues. But, in the next place, corruptions and abuses are inseparable from our Church Establishment. Here, also, I have the sanction of the clergy themselves. Bishop Warburton, in his letters to Bishop Hurd, touching the practical authority of cabinets over the Church, says—"The Rabbins make the giant Gog or Magog contemporary with Noah, and convinced by his preaching; so that he was disposed to take the benefit of the ark. But here lay the distress; it by no means suited his dimensions. Therefore, as he could not enter in, he contented himself to ride upon it astride. Image to yourself the illustrious cavalier mounted on his hackney, and see if it do not bring before you the Church bestrid by some lumpish Minister of State, who turns and winds it at his pleasure." Now, hon. Members will bear in mind that this is not my language, but the language of a Bishop; and would to God that the Bishops of the present day would display that sincerity which evidently existed in the breast of Warburton. Paley also wrote to the same effect, but not in such a sarcastic and cutting manner. "The making of the Church" (says he) "an engine or even an ally of the State, converting it into the means of strengthening or diffusing influence, or regarding it as a support of regal in opposition to popular forms of government, have served only to debase the institution, and to introduce into it numerous corruptions and abuses." It is of no use to mince the matter, or to try to conceal the fact; the Establishment must be an engine of the State; the clergy must support the Government, however tyrannical or corrupt; they must fight, from the pulpit, the battles of the State. What, I ask, is the question in the selection of a Bishop? Having never appointed one myself, I may be mistaken; but doubtless the noble Lord (Althorp), if I be wrong, can set me right. It strikes me, then, that the question is not who is the fittest man to take the oversight of the Church, but who is the most likely to strengthen the Administration of the day. Truly it is a very venerable and Christian institution! But what shall we say as to religious liberty? Why, that the Establishment is utterly incompatible with it. Is religious liberty good? Then the Establishment must be bad. Upon what principle will you contend for an establishment? It must be an exclusive one; for if a man can be a good member of society, and ultimately gain admittance into heaven without passing through your Established Church in his way to it, what pretence is there for draining the pockets of the people for the purpose of supporting an institution which, to say the most of it, can produce no effect which is not capable of being produced by other means? I assert, then, that there should be no Establishment at all; or if there be one, that then you ought to put an end to what is called religious liberty. But have we that liberty? No. It is true, indeed, that you allow me to worship God according to the dictates of my own conscience; but, at the same time, you make me contribute to the support of a system which I abhor, and firmly believe to be an abomination to God as well as pernicious to man. Then, again, your religious Establishment is manifestly injurious to civil liberty; and that, too, in the judgment of one of your own Archdeacons. "In all exclusive establishments (says Archdeacon Blackburn) where temporal emoluments are annexed to the profession of a certain system of doctrines and the usage of a certain routine of forms, and appropriated to an order of men so and so qualified, that order of men will naturally think themselves interested that things should continue as they are. A reformation might endanger their emoluments." One hardly knows which to admire most, the truth or the sagacity of the remark; and I put it to the House—"Could the people have been robbed of so many of their rights and plundered of so much of their substance as they have been, if the clergy had, as it was their duty to do, advocated the cause of civil liberty?" However, while their duty pointed one way, their interest pointed another; and, seeing that "a reformation would endanger their emoluments," they fled from liberty, and stuck to corruption. And, now, to close my observations on the first general proposition contained in the resolution which I shall have the honour to submit to the House, I assert that the Church, as by law established, is a regular trading concern. Speaking of the ecclesiastical powers, Dr. Hartley uses these words:—"They have all left the true, pure, simple religion, and teach for doctrines the commandments of man. They are all merchants of the earth, and have set up a kingdom of this world, abounding in riches, temporal honours, and external pomp." Who is not aware of this distressing fact? Is it not as notorious as the sun at noon day, that livings are advertised in the public papers, and bought and sold as openly as cattle in a market? And what is the motive for entering into the sacred ministry? I do not say that it is thus in all cases; but in nine out of ten, or perhaps in ninety-nine out of a hundred, the motive is precisely the same as that which induces a man to enter into the army, the navy, or any other profession. They may say they are moved by the Holy Ghost; but the fact is, that they are influenced by a desire, which is common to us all, to make provision for the flesh. If the question were to be put to me—"Is the Establishment of no use?" I should answer, "Yes; it is very useful to the Aristocracy of the country;" and when I look at the Church, the army, the navy, the pensions, the sinecures, and the places, I am tempted to conclude that the Aristocracy take for granted that the Divine Being created all the rest of us for their convenience. However, be that as it may, Bishop Warburton's words touching the Aristocracy and the Church are very striking. "Our grandees," says he, "have at length found their way back into the Church. I only wonder they have been so long about it. But be assured that nothing but a new religious revolution, to sweep away the fragments that Harry the Eighth left after banqueting his courtiers, will drive them out again."

And now, having shown that your Establishment is not sanctioned by Christ or his Apostles—that it holds out temptations to hypocrisy—that it fosters a persecuting spirit—that corruptions and abuses are inseparable from it—that it is incompatible with religious liberty—that it is injurious to civil liberty, and that it is a trading concern, I put it to the House, whether I have not established the first general proposition, "that the Church, as by law established, is not recommended by practical utility?" However, a great deal more might be urged. For instance, is not the certainty of emolument a temptation to remissness in duty? To a clergyman of the Established Church, it is of no sort of consequence what his parishioners think of him. Whether they approve or disapprove of his doctrines or manner of life—whether he discharge or neglect his clerical duties, to him it is of no consequence, because his emoluments are sure; whereas, if he depended on his congregation for support, there can be no doubt, whatever the bent of his inclination might be, that he would be more circumspect and attentive. Ought not a minister of religion to be zealous and laborious? Ought he not to be beloved by his hearers? Ought he not to give himself up to the study of the Scriptures? Now I ask, are the clergy of the Church of England more zealous or laborious than dissenting ministers? Are they more beloved by their hearers? Do they study more closely the Word of God? No hon. Member will venture to answer those questions in the affirmative; nor shall I be told that dissenters are worse members of society than churchmen. What advantage, then, do we gain, by this pompous and costly Establishment, and upon what ground will you contend for the necessity or expediency of its continuance? I will now trouble the House with a few more extracts from the writings of some of the Divines of the Established Church, and then proceed to the second general proposition contained in my Resolution. First, let us hear what Archbishop Newcome says, when speaking of Ireland: "Great numbers of country parishes are without churches, notwithstanding the largeness and frequency of parliamentary grants for building them; but meeting-houses, and Romish chapels, which are built and repaired with greater zeal, are in sufficient numbers about the country." Paley says, "I do not know that it is in any degree true that the influence of religion is the greatest where there are the fewest dissenters." Duncan, in his Travels in America, says, "It has often been said, that the disinclination of the heart to religious truth renders a State Establishment necessary for the purpose of christianizing a country. Ireland and America can furnish abundant evidence of the fallacy of such an hypothesis. In the one country we see an ecclesiastical establishment of the most costly description utterly inoperative in dispelling ignorance or refuting error; in the other, no establishment of any kind, and yet religion making daily and hourly progress, promoting inquiry, diffusing knowledge, strengthening the weak, and mollifying the hardened." Dr. Henry Moore, speaking of the Reformed Churches, says, "They have separated from the great Babylon to build those which are less and more tolerable, but yet not to be tolerated for ever." Bishop Burnet says, "I have always had a true zeal for the Church of England; yet I must say there are many things in it that have been very uneasy to me." Simpson says, "Our confirmations, and I may add, even our ordination for the sacred ministry, are dwindling into painful and disgusting ceremonies." And again, "Who is to blame for the spread of infidelity. The Bishops and clergy of the land more than any other people in it. We, as a body of men, are almost solely and exclusively culpable." Bishop Lavington, speaking of moral preaching, says, "We have long been attempting the reformation of the nation by discourses of this kind. With what success? None at all. On the contrary, we have dexterously preached the people into downright infidelity." Hartley says, "It is evident that the worldly-mindedness and neglect of the clergy is a great scandal to religion and cause of infidelity." There, let those who attach no importance to what I have said, answer these men, if they can, touching the practical utility of our miscalled religious Establishment. And now I have to request the attention of the House to my second general proposition—namely, "That the revenues of the Church have always been subject to legislative enactments." That every national establishment must be at the disposal of the nation is a self-evident proposition; and why a distinction should be made between the Church and the Bank, I for one am at a loss to imagine. The right of the Legislature to dispose of the revenues of the Church, is as indisputable as its right to take away or alter the Bank Charter. But what do hon. Members mean by the Church? They talk about the Church and the sacredness of Church property with a great deal of fluency, seeming at the same time to take for granted that Church and parsons are synonymous terms; or, in other words, by the Church they mean the clergy. That, however, is a gross error; and if they wish to have a definition of the term "Church," let them look into their articles of religion, and they will find that the parsons do not constitute the Church, but that it consists of a congregation of faithful men, the clergy being mere office bearers or servants therein. The people make up the Church; its property is the property of the people; and they have an undoubted right to dispose of it at their discretion.

But has not the Legislature always acted upon this principle? And here the House will allow me to bring to its recollection what took place at the time of the Protestant Reformation. By the 27th of Henry 8th, all monasteries which had not above 200*l.* a-year in lands, tenements, rents, tithes, &c. were given to the king, that he might give, grant, and dispose of them to the honour of God and the wealth of the realm. Thus the King held those monasteries, not for his own benefit or the enriching of his sycophantic courtiers, but in trust for the people at large; and doubtless it would be entertaining and useful to trace the progress of this property into the hands of its present owners. That, however, may amuse us at a future time, when I imagine it will be found that many of our aristocratic families are greatly indebted to this plundering and wife-killing King. Then, again, by the 31st of Henry 8th, all the remaining monasteries were given to the King, his heirs and successors for ever; while, by the 37th of the same reign and the 1st of Edward 6th, all the possessions of colleges, free chapels, chantries, and hospitals, were vested in the Crown. Thus the whole of the revenues of the Church were swept off by Acts of Parliament; and is there a man to be found who would expose himself to the ridicule and contempt of the world by asserting that those revenues are not now at the disposal of the Legislature? What was the subject of legislation with one generation must remain the same with all succeeding generations; and if I were to be asked what is the worst title under which a man can hold, my answer would be, "An act of Parliament;" and for this obvious reason: every Act is liable to be repealed. And now let us see what has been done with the revenues of the Church since the Reformation. By the 3rd of William and Mary five shillings an acre was substituted for tithes in kind of hemp and flax. By the 2nd and 3rd Edward 6th, all barren heaths and waste grounds were exempted from tithes of corn and hay for seven years after their conversion into arable or meadow land. By the 40th of George 3rd it was enacted that no suit should be entertained for the tithe of agistment for dry or barren cattle, except where such tithe had been usually paid within the last ten years; and the 57th of George 3rd, provides that the stipends of curates shall be in proportion to the population and value of benefices. And here, let me ask, has the Legislature ever attempted to regulate the salaries of stewards or bailiffs? It has however regulated the stipends of curates; and why, but because the latter were servants of the public, and the revenues of the Church were at the disposal of the people. But the Legislature has thought proper to increase the emoluments of the clergy; for to the eternal disgrace of a former Parliament during the reign of George 3rd, a sum of one million six hundred thousand pounds was granted for the augmentation of small livings. Oh! 'tis a delightful thing to get hold of the public purse! Now, at the time this grant was made, we had Bishops in the possession of twenty or thirty thousand a year; and if nothing else be done, I think this sum must be returned. But the clergy are under great personal restraints from which other men are free. By the 13th of Elizabeth, it is enacted that if an incumbent be absent above eight days in a-year, he shall lose one year's profit of his benefice, to be distributed among the poor. Have landlords been thus restrained? What would the noble Lord (Lord Althorp) say, if I were to move for leave to bring in a bill to confine him to his country residence under a similar penalty? But if the revenues of the Church be private property, or the clergy anything more than the servants of the public, this is the most tyrannical act that was ever passed, and ought to be torn out of the Statute Book. Several other Acts, with which I will not trouble the House, have since been passed, relating to the residence of the clergy.

Again, it is worthy of remark that clerical benefices cannot be alienated; and his Majesty's law-officers are aware that every disposition of a living by rent-charge, annuity, or otherwise, is absolutely void. I do not say, indeed, that the parson would not be liable upon his covenant to repay the money lent; but I do assert, without fear of contradiction, that the grant itself would be void. What, then, becomes of the doctrine of private property? To me it is a matter of astonishment how some honourable members can talk as they do about legal rights and vested interests. To be sure, a tenant for life cannot sell or charge the remainder or reversion; but he can, at his own discretion, sell or charge his life-estate. Not so, however, the parson. He is incapable of charging his living to any extent; and I hope we shall hear no more of their legal claim. Let the ground of right be abandoned, and if any position at all be taken, let it be that of expediency alone. Once more I assert that the emoluments of livings are mere stipendiary payments, precisely the same as the salary of an exciseman or of a custom-house officer: and for this assertion I have the sanction of the Judges, it having been decided that the profits of a living did not pass to the assignees of an insolvent parson, but that his case was analogous to that of a half-pay officer. Thus a clergyman may get into debt, go to jail, cheat his creditors, get discharged and enjoy the emoluments of his living after all; and this, to be sure, is perfectly compatible with Christianity. I ask, then, have not the revenues of the Church been always subjected to Legislative enactments? Have not those revenues been increased by the legislature? Are not the clergy under personal restraints from which other men are free? Are they not restrained from alienating their benefices? And are not the emoluments of a living mere stipendiary payments? No man will deny these facts. I come now to the last proposition contained in the resolution which I shall have the honour to submit to the House; which is, that the greater part, if not the whole, of the revenues of the Church, ought to be appropriated to the relief of the nation. I say the greater part, because there may be some doubt as to whether the clergy were not at one time entitled to one third of those revenues; but I do not think, that, under existing circumstances, the benefit of that doubt would be great.

And here let me ask hon. Members what the state of affairs was before the Protestant Reformation? By the canons of Elfric, it appears that—"the holy fathers had decreed that tithes should be paid into God's Church, and that the priests should divide them into three parts; one for the reparation of the Church a second for the poor, and a third for God's servants who attended the Church." Now, if further information be required on this point, I beg to refer the House to Archbishop Egbert's Excerptions, 15th Richard 2nd, and the 4th of Henry 4th. And the fact, that all the revenues of the Church were derived from our Catholic ancestors is by no means unworthy of attention. That the whole of these revenues were ever intended for the purpose of affording religious instruction, I positively deny and challenge contradiction; while it is clear that such part of them as was to be applied to that purpose was given to promulgate doctrines and to inculcate a faith from which our Church now dissents, and which the clergy declare to be damnable. I ask, then, would they like to account for by-gone rents and profits, and to hand them over to the popish priesthood? Probably they have no inclination to do that. Let them acknowledge, then, that they are indebted to Acts of Parliamentfor their present possessions; and with that acknowledgment let an admission be made that the Legislature has as great a right to dispossess them as a bloody-minded King and his rapacious courtiers had to dispossess the Catholics of old. But there are other and perhaps more substantial reasons for appropriating the revenues of the Church to the relief of the nation. It is a decidedly Antichristian institution—an institution which I believe to be no less an abomination to God than it is injurious to man. From our very infancy, we, as Protestants, were taught to rail against the Church of Rome, and to regard it as "Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." That may be all true enough; but if the Romish Church be a "mother of harlots," it is natural to suppose that she is not childless. Where, then are her daughters? To hunt them all out is a task which I am not disposed to undertake: but, in pointing to the Establishment of this country, I present to the notice of the House a harlot having all the features of her apostate and adulterous mother. When some men talk of religion and a Christian Church, they seem to forget that there is such a thing as the New Testament. To that I refer honourable Members, and ask them, whether they find therein anything bearing the least resemblance to our religious Establishment. Christ was not rich; the Apostles did not fare sumptuously every day; they did not ride in splendid carriages; they took no part in legislative affairs, neither did they "eat the fat and clothe themselves with the wool of the flock;" but, on the contrary, they fed that flock with spiritual food, working with their own hands in order to supply their own bodily wants. Not so, however, the clergy of our Established Church. It is true they caution us against the pomps and vanities of this wicked world. They tell us that the love of money is the root of all evil—that those who will be rich fall into divers snares and temptations which drown men in perdition; and that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven; and then again they declare that they are moved by the Holy Ghost to take the cure of souls.

Now, all this is very proper; but, unfortunately, they appear to contradict in practice what they profess in principle. They make a pompous and vain show, and take especial care of that which they declare to be a deadly evil; while as to the motions of the Holy Ghost in taking the cure of souls, they sometimes leave those souls to the cure of a half-starved curate, and move off to Paris, Rome, or some other place of fashionable resort, where they consume in indolence a great portion of the substance of their flocks. Now, I am disposed to take them at their word, to ease them of a little of that which they say, and which I believe, is pernicious to their souls, leaving them to the full benefit and enjoyment of their religion, to which I am sure there can be no reasonable objection on their part. But I have heard several hon. Members talk about respectability, and contend for the necessity of maintaining that of the clergy. I quite agree with them in point of terms; and yet there seems to be a substantial difference between us, for it is evident that by respectability they mean large parcels of money. Now I do not think that wealth has much, if anything, to do with respectability. A man may be a rich fool, or a rich rogue; while experience is sufficient to convince us that respectability is by no means incompatible with poverty. At any rate, our Saviour was not rich, neither were his Apostles; and yet who will venture to say that they were not respectable? If, indeed, it be necessary for a minister of religion to be in affluent circumstances in order to render him respectable, then we must cease to reverence the first teachers of Christianity; but God forbid we should do that. But this Establishment has been a great national evil. What have the clergy done? Why, instead of applying to their own purposes only one-third of the tithes, they have grasped the whole, and thrown the burthen of the poor and the expenses of the churches on the people.

Had they been less avaricious and more benevolent, there might not have been much cause for complaint. The evil, however, does not stop there. That the nation is in distress is admitted. Now, distress is the bitter fruit of taxation. Taxation is the consequence of wicked and disastrous wars. The clergy were the most strenuous advocates for those wars; and they have invariably supported tyranny and corruption. Was that the course which their sacred office prescribed? Was it compatible with the religion they professed to teach?

If instead of striking hands with the corrupt governments of the day, they had stood up in opposition to them, Pitt and his associates could never have plundered and enslaved the people as they did. When, I ask, did the Bishops and Clergy ever defend the rights and liberties of the people? Will the noble Lord (Althorp) tell me that they advocated the Reform Bill? To that they rendered all the opposition in their power. If they could, they would have crushed it in the bud; and sure am I that they have since strained every nerve to prevent the people from enjoying the fruits of that measure. They are bitter enemies to freedom. What is it that Ministers intend to do? That the distress of the nation is great, none will deny, although I am aware that the noble Lord (Althorp) is not disposed to admit the existence of the evil to that extent to which I believe it to exist. I affirm, however, that tradesmen, manufacturers, farmers, labourers, in short—nearly all those who do not live on an abominable taxing and tithing system—are on the brink of ruin, and that something must be done. What then will you do? Are Ministers prepared to sponge out the national debt? No, they will not do that. Will they put down the army, reduce the navy, break up some of their establishments, curtail salaries, and lop off sinecures and unmerited pensions? No, they will not do that either. To talk of relieving the people from taxation, without doing all or some of these things, is sheer nonsense; and I will never unite with those hon. Members, who, though they are not prepared to break up any of our establishments, are continually harping upon a reduction of taxation. The thing is impracticable. If you will have a large standing army, pay the interest of the debt, and let the parsons pocket the revenues of the Church, it is folly, if not hypocrisy, to talk of relieving the people.

Relieved, however, they must be, and that speedily, or a convulsion will ensue; and however sanguine the noble Lord and his right hon. Colleagues may be,—however lightly they may think of the condition of the people,—and whatever reliance they may place on that power which they possess, I am confident that they will be unable to keep the present system together much longer; but if, in the exercise of a sound discretion, they will do justice to a suffering people, by properly appropriating the revenues of the Established Church and all other public property, then relief may be afforded, and the nation rendered more prosperous and powerful than at any former period. It is my humble opinion, therefore, that the greater part, if not the whole, of the revenues of the Church ought to be applied to the relief of the nation, because the Establishment is not recommended by practical utility; because its revenues have always been subject to legislative enactments; because the Clergy were never entitled to more than one-third of the tithes; and because this is the most equitable, if not the only way of preventing anarchy, by stopping the progress of distress. And now, however much the House may differ from me in opinion, hon. Members will, I trust, give me credit for sincerity. I assure them I have spoken conscientiously, and been actuated by a sense of duty; and whatever may be its present fate, I cannot refrain from submitting the following Resolution:—"That the Church of England, as by law established, is not recommended by practical utility; that its revenues have always been subject to legislative enactments; and that the greater part, if not the whole, of those revenues, ought to be appropriated to the relief of the nation."

Lord *Althorp* said, that the House, he was sure, would not expect him to answer the speech of the hon. member for Brighton. He would only observe, that the hon. Member had stated that he was a Dissenter; and he must say, that he was a member of the Church of England. The question, therefore, as to whether that Church were good or not was one on which they might very properly differ. The hon. Member said his Motion was most important. In that he could not agree with the hon. Member, for he could not conceive that it possessed any practical utility. He would not detain the House by going into a discussion of a polemical question which might be suitable for another place; but it was a question into which it was not fit for him to enter there. He should only say, that he would meet the Motion with a decided negative.

Mr. *Cobbett:* The noble Lord said, the House hardly expected him to answer the speech of the hon. member for Brighton. No, nor did I either.

Mr. *Harvey* acknowledged, that he too was a Dissenter and a Non-Conformist; but, though he was prepared to support the abstract proposition made by the hon. Member, he could not agree to all its terms. The hon. Member had rather prejudiced the question, by directing his arguments to the abuses of the Church, instead of limiting himself to establishing the great principle of religious liberty, and the injustice of compelling Dissenters to support an Established Church; which, being at variance with all spiritual freedom, was a fair and open subject of investigation. The hon. Member had rather dwelt on the administration of the Church, than upheld the great principle of toleration. He could not say, that the Church was altogether opposed to practical utility, for that would imply that it had been of no utility at all times, to which he could not agree. He should like to have the principle of exonerating the Dissenters from paying to the Church brought under discussion; and he had hoped that the noble Lord would, at least, even on this occasion, have acknowledged the principle that the Dissenters ought not to pay to the Established Church. He subscribed to the latter part of the proposition, but not to the former; and he trusted the hon. Mover would withdraw the Motion, as to negative it might place the non-conformists in an improper light.

Sir *Robert Inglis* would express his utter dissent from all the words of the proposition of the hon. Mover. He would make only one observation on the system of sermon and speech of the hon. Member. The hon. Member admitted, that he was a Dissenter, and he attacked those who in that House could not appear to defend themselves. He attacked them on account of their temporalities, and he attacked them also on their spiritual practices and motives. The hon. Member was, he believed, not only a Dissenter, but a licensed preacher among that body, or he had been; and it was hardly fair in him to attack the Ministers of the Church of England as to their motives and conduct, when they could not come into that House to defend themselves. He felt, that the House had expressed its opinion so decidedly, that it was unnecessary for him to trespass on its time.

Mr. *Aglionby* was friendly to the latter part of the proposition, but not to the first part of it, and had no other course but to oppose it.

Mr. *O'Dwyer* proposed an Amendment to this effect:—"That the Revenues of the Church of England have always been subject to legislative enactments, and they ought to be appropriated to their original institution."

Mr. *Harvey* objected to the Amendment, as implying something to which no Protestant Dissenter could agree. He could not allow those revenues to be appropriated as they were originally.

The Amendment withdrawn, and the original Motion negatived without a division. Some voices called out "the Ayes have it," after the Speaker had decided; but

The *Speaker* said, they were too late, for not one "Aye" had been uttered when he put the question.

BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION.] Lord John Russell moved for leave to bring in a Bill to provide for the Trial of Petitions complaining of general Bribery and Corruption in Cities and Boroughs sending Members to Parliament. The noble Lord explained the objects of his Bill shortly, but the noise in the House prevented him from being heard in the Gallery.

Mr. *O'Connell* wished to know whether the parties were to be exposed to all the expense of the Grenville Act, as that would be a bar to justice in many places in England, and particularly in Ireland? Did the noble Lord mean to impose any oaths respecting bribery on the Members of that House?

Lord *John Russell* was understood to reply, that when petitions were frivolous and vexatious, the parties presenting them would be saddled with the costs; when they were otherwise, the expense would be defrayed in the same manner as the expense of other Parliamentary Committees. With respect to the question of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, he never contemplated imposing upon the Members of that House such an oath as had been mentioned; it might be very well to require an elector to declare upon oath whether he had or had not been bribed, because that was a matter of fact to which he could at once speak; but not so with a Member of Parliament, for at an election many acts might be done, of which he, probably, would be more or less cognizant, but they might not appear to his mind to amount to bribery; and, therefore, in calling upon a Member to take such an oath, it was requiring him to swear to a matter of opinion, and not of fact.

Leave given.

LIMERICK CITY ELECTION.] Mr. *William Roche*: Sir, the subject matter of the Motion which it becomes my duty to bring before the House, in obedience to the wishes and instructions of a considerable and respectable portion of my constituents, is certainly one which at all times demands, and has indeed at all times commanded, the most serious attention and jealous vigilance of this House, involving, as it does, the all important considerations of freedom of election, the rights and privileges of the people, and the dignity and character of this House, which must needs rise in the estimation and confidence of the people in proportion as it is felt to be the free emanation of their choice. The petition, Sir, which I hold in my hand, contains the complaint that forms the ground of my Motion, and charges the Irish Government with unduly interfering and exercising their influence during the last election for the city of Limerick against, not my return, but that of my hon. colleague Mr. David Roche, who is not now in his place, being at present in Limerick. But, Sir, as I have no wish to portray this complaint with the slightest shade of higher colouring than the allegations contained in the petition call upon one to do, I think my better way will be to read those charges from the petition itself; but before I do so, allow me to explain why it has not been earlier brought under the notice of this House. Sir, the petition has been in my hands for some weeks, and the delay of acting upon it arose from the following circumstances. Perceiving when I received it, that it contained such grave charges against the Irish Government, I conceived that justice and courtesy alike called upon me to apprize the then right hon. Secretary for Ireland of its object, and, in order to enable him to inquire into the matter and be prepared to defend the conduct of his Government. He did accordingly write over to Ireland, and obtained an answer from one of the gentlemen, Mr. Vokes (Chief Magistrate of police in the city of Limerick, and stated to be an agent in conveying the desire of Government on this occasion) denying that he, Mr. Vokes, used any such influence on the part of Government, or was at all authorized to use it. This reply the then right hon. Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Stanley) communicated to me, and I transmitted it to my constituents, the petitioners, on which they held a meeting and adopted the following Resolution—'Resolved, that the reply of Mr. Stanley 'to our respected Representative (Mr. 'William Roche) in reference to the complaint of undue interference with the 'freedom of election, contained in a petition from 146 electors of this city, is 'unsatisfactory, inasmuch as it contains 'but the denial of one of the parties implicated, and leaves undisturbed the facts 'which, as the petition alleges, can be 'sustained by irrefutable testimony. That 'therefore, we call upon both our Representatives to demand, with that uncompromising energy by which their parliamentary career is already distinguished, 'that thorough investigation which the 'petition claims, and the future freedom 'of election requires.' Sir, this "Resolution" necessarily left me no alternative but to bring the matter before the House, and as the petitioners demanded only investigation, as the case is one of such general importance, and as the petitioners say they can substantiate the charge by irrefutable evidence; I conceive that their prayer ought to be granted. I have no personal feeling on the subject, and am acting solely in obedience to the duty I owe my constituents and the public in moving "That the petition be referred to a Select Committee, to consider the matter thereof, and to report their observations thereupon to the House."

Sir *John Hobhouse* contended, that the hon. Member opposite had laid no sufficient grounds for the appointment of a Committee, and he should certainly resist the Motion; for the appointment of such a Committee would amount to pronouncing a sentence of condemnation upon the conduct of the Irish Government. The hon. Member had said, that he made a sufficient case by merely presenting a petition from certain individuals, who were no doubt respectable; but that fact did not constitute evidence sufficient to substantiate all their statements. He did not say, that the hon. Member had acted improperly but he had not brought forward sufficient evidence to support his proposition.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, that the case for the Motion was, that Major Vokes had interfered most improperly with the Limerick election, and that Mr. Kenney had done the same. To that, he contended, the right hon. Baronet had given no answer.

Mr. *Stanley* affirmed that the conduct of the Irish Government had been perfectly impartial during the whole of the election; and read two letters, one from Major Vokes, and the other from Mr. Kenney, in which both gentlemen denied the interference imputed to them.

Motion negatived.

DISTRIBUTION OF STAMPS.] Mr. *Cobbett* moved for a Return, stating the names of the Commissioners of Stamps, of the Solicitors of Stamps, of all under officers and clerks, and other persons in that department; stating the annual sum which each of the said persons receives as salary or pay; also stating the names of retired commissioners, solicitors, clerks and other persons in the said department, and the sums which each of the said retired persons receives annually. And also stating the names of all the distributors of stamps, county by county, in England Wales, and Scotland; and stating the salary or sum that each distributor annually receives for his services.

Lord *Althorp* said, that the number of names of persons, for a list of which, with the salaries attached to their offices, &c., the hon. Member now moved, amounted to no less than 525. He just stated that fact, to show the enormous trouble that would be occasioned in making out this return. He should like to know, therefore, from the hon. Member, what object he had in view in moving for such a return. As yet the hon. Member had mentioned no grounds for this Motion, to which he (Lord Althorp) should certainly object, unless good parliamentary grounds were established for complying with it.

Mr. *Cobbett* said, in the first place, with regard to the enormous trouble which the noble Lord asserted the taking out of this return would occasion, that he (Mr. Cobbett) had one clerk, and that he would most undoubtedly discharge him on Saturday night unless he would in the space of twenty-four hours make out such a list as that of those 525 persons, with the salaries attached to their offices. What he (Mr. Cobbett) wanted to ascertain by this return was, who the persons were who pocketed a quarter of a million of money out of the collection of the stamps. He had a motion for the 26th instant relative to the Stamp duties, upon which occasion he would prove clearly to the House that those who should not pay those taxes—namely, the poor of the country—did pay them; that the rich, who ought to pay them, did not pay them; and his object in moving for this return was to prove that the rich actually received them. If the noble Lord should refuse him this return, which he did not ask as a favour from him, he (Mr. Cobbett), when he brought forward his Motion, would be obliged to proceed upon presumption, as the facts were withheld from him.

Lord *Althorp* had never supposed that this return was asked as a favour. What he said was, that good parliamentary grounds should be laid for such a Motion, and he did not think that the hon. Member had stated such grounds. If the hon. Member had stated that there were more persons employed in those departments than there ought to be, or that improper persons were employed in them, such would be good grounds for granting the return; but he had not made any such statement.

Mr. *O'Connell* contended, that sufficient grounds had been stated for granting the Motion. The mere fact that a quarter of a million of money was spent upon this department was sufficient to induce the House to call for such a return.

Lord *Althorp* begged to correct the hon. and learned member for Dublin. So far from this department costing half a million, or a quarter of a million, the whole of the salaries of the persons employed in it amounted only to 140,383*l.*

Motion negatived.

SAVINGS' BANKS.] Lord *Althorp*, pursuant to the notice which he had given last night, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to enable persons to purchase small annuities through the means of the Savings' Banks, and to consolidate and amend the laws relative to savings' banks. The noble Lord said, that the object of the measure was to place it in the power of the labouring classes to purchase such annuities. The House was aware that the lowest sum which could be granted at present as a Government annuity was 30*l.* a-year. It was proposed by this measure to enable persons, through the means of the savings' banks, to purchase Government annuities so low as 20*l.* a-year. He did not apprehend that any danger of loss would arise to the parties paying the instalments, in consequence of the cessation of the payment of them; for it was provided by the Bill, when parties, either from necessity or choice, discontinued the payment of the instalments, they should receive back all the money which they had lodged in the savings' bank, without interest, however, which circumstance would distinguish such payment from the other monies paid into those establishments. It was proposed by this Bill, taking a person between the ages of twenty and thirty, that he should pay 6*s.* a month into the savings' bank as an instalment, and, on arriving at the age of sixty, be entitled to an annuity of 20*l.* a-year. From calculations which had been made it appeared that the Government would lose nothing by this arrangement, and it was one that might be attended with much advantage to the industrious classes. There were two clauses in this Bill also for amending the law regarding savings' banks—one was, to make it necessary to give a longer notice before money was drawn out than was required at present; and the other was, that if an individual should draw out all the money he had deposited, he could not re-invest it except as a new deposit.

Mr. *Thomas Attwood* said, that he believed the Government was at this moment paying 60,000*l.* a-year out of the national purse for the maintenance of those establishments—a sum which they had cost the country for many years, and the aggregate of which exceeded all the money that had been lost by 1*l.* notes since the world began, and all that had been lost by the failure of country banks during the last ten years. These establishments, which had cost so much, instead of an advantage, were a nuisance. The original intention in instituting savings' banks was, that small sums should be deposited in them. They had a savings' bank in Birmingham, the amount of the deposits in which at present was 60,000*l.*; and in looking over the accounts the other day he found that 50,000*l.* of that consisted of deposits of sums of 20*l.* and upwards. Now he never knew a country bank in his life that would refuse to take deposits of that amount, and give interest upon them. Savings' banks were a sort of screw in the hands of the Government to fix down the working classes to its system.

Mr. *Brotherton* did not agree with the hon. member for Birmingham, and conceived that savings' banks had been productive of great national advantage, by enabling the labouring classes to save their money.

Mr. *Pease* said, that without wishing to disparage country banks, he could not help remarking, that when he knew, during his own experience, that the small county which he represented had been a loser to the extent of 600,000*l.* or 700,000*l.* by country banks, he thought it would be a bad principle to have the poor lodging their savings in them. The accounts of the savings' banks should be annually laid before the Government, for it was most necessary to maintain a superintending control over them.

Lord *Althorp* said, that the accounts of all the savings' banks were annually laid before Government; and where any bank neglected to do so, the Commissioners exercised the power (one or two instances of which had occurred since he came into office) of closing such bank till its accounts were sent up.

Motion agreed to.

The noble Lord brought in the Bill, which was read a first time.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, April 17, 1833.

Minutes.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of Mr. Stewart Mackenzie, an Account of the Number of Journeys performed daily by the Greenwich and Paddington Stages and Omnibuses, &c.—On the Motion of Mr. Sullivan, an Account of the Quantity of Starch manufactured each year in Great Britain and Ireland, and of the Duty paid on such as is Imported from the latter Country into the former.—On the Motion of Mr. George Young, the Countries on the Importations from which additional Duties have been levied under the authority of the Acts 4th George 4th, cap. 77, and 6th George 4th, cap. 111, to countervail the discriminating Duties charged in those Countries on Goods, Wares, and Merchandize, Imported into them respectively in British Ships; and of the Number and Tonnage of Ships Built and Registered in the several British Ports, in the year ending 5th January, 1833; and of such as have been mortgaged in the same year.—On the Motion of Sir Thomas Freemantle, Copies of Reports relative to the Price of Corn in Foreign Countries, made by his Majesty's Consuls abroad, and not yet before Parliament.—On the Motion of Mr. Hume, the Amount received by the Receiver General of the Droits of the Crown and Perquisites of the Admiralty, since the Commencement of the present Reign, with the Amount of his Salary and Allowance.—On the Motion of Mr. O'Dwyer, the Barristers appointed by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, under the Irish Reform Act, for the Registry of Voters, &c.

Bills. Read a second time:—Savings Banks; Annuities; Banks; Customs Bounties; British Possessions; Registry of Vessels'; Customs Duties; Customs' Management; Isle of Man Trade; Warehousing; Smuggling Prevention; and Navigation.

Petitions presented. By Sir R. Donkin, from Berwick-upon-Tweed, for the Abolition of all Military Sinecures.—By Mr. H. Jolliffe, Mr. Tyrrell, Mr. Walter, Mr. Duncombe, Mr. Macaulay, Mr. E. Buller, Mr. Blamire, Mr. Strutt, Mr. Aglionby, Mr. Sheppard, Mr. Sinclair, Mr. Etwall, Mr. C. K. Tynte, Mr. Bannerman, Mr. Lister, Sir Gray Skipwith, Sir William Molesworth, by Lord John Russell, by Lord Charles Russell, by Lord Henniker, and the Earl of Kerry, from many Places,—against Slavery.—By Mr. Bell, Mr. Tyrrell, Mr. Pigott, Mr. Macaulay, Mr. G. Sinclair, Mr. Tayleure, Mr. Tracey, Mr. Etwall, Mr. Baring, Mr. Andrew Johnston, Mr. H. Jolliffe, and by Sir W. Guise, from a Number of Places,—for a Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By Sir R. Donkin, by General Sharpe, by Mr. Robarts, Mr. Tayleure, and Mr. Langston,—against the Assessed Taxes.—By Mr. Macaulay, from Leeds; and Mr. Tayleure, from Bridgewater, for Corporation Reform.—By Mr. Pigott, and Mr. Baring, from Worfield, and Saffron Walden,—against the Sale of Beer Act.—By Mr. Hawes, Mr. Wigney, Mr. Vivian, Mr. Macaulay, Mr. Hume, Mr. Baring, and Mr. Attwood, from Leeds, Birmingham, &c., and other Places,—for a Removal of the Civil Disabilities of the Jews.—By Colonel Leith Hay, and General Sharpe, from Places in Scotland, for Alteration in the Burgh (Scotland) Bill.—By Mr. Strutt, from Derby, against Tithes in Ireland.—By Mr. Macaulay, and Colonel Torrens, from the Methodists of Leeds, and other Places,—for a Repeal of the Laws affecting the Dissenters.—By Mr. Duncombe, from York, for annexing the District of the Airsty to one of the Ridings of Yorkshire.—By General Sharpe, Mr. Andrew Johnston, and Mr. G. Sinclair, from a great many Places,—against the present System of Church Patronage in Scotland.—By Mr. A. Johnston, from the Synod of Fyfe, for Measures to strengthen the Protestant Faith in Ireland.—By Mr. A. Johnston, from Cupar, for imposing the Laws relative to real Property in Scotland.—By Mr. C. Buller, from Burton-upon-Trent, for the total Abolition of Tithes.—By Mr. Murray, from Leith, for a Repeal of the Duty on Stamps for Receipts.—By General Sharpe, from Dumfries, for Poor Laws for Ireland.—By Mr. Lambton, from the Roman Catholic Clergy of Durham, for a Law to enable them to perform valid Marriages in their Churches.—By Mr. T. Attwood, from Atherstone, for a Reduction of Taxation; from several Places, for Vote by Ballot; from a Political Union, for an equitable Adjustment of the Claims of the Fundholders; and from Walsall, for a Repeal of the Taxes on Knowledge.—By Sir H. Hardinge, Mr. Brotherton, and Mr. T. Attwood, from Salford, Hertford, and Walsall, for a Factories' Regulation Bill.

BOROUGH OF LAUNCESTON.] Sir *William Molesworth* presented a petition from the inhabitants of the borough of Launceston, complaining of corporate abuses, and of the want of respectability in the persons composing the body of Aldermen in the borough, and praying inquiry into the subject. As an instance of the deficiency on the score of respectability, he would mention that the gamekeeper of the Duke of Northumberland had been appointed an Alderman, thereby presenting the singular junction of a preserver of game and an administrator of justice. Notwithstanding the intention of the Reform Bill had been to diminish the interest of the noble Duke in Launceston, yet it was notorious that attempts had successfully been made to regain that influence, and Launceston was now as much a nomination borough as it was before the passing of the Reform Bill. He had felt it his duty to state thus much, as the petitioners felt deeply on the subject, and begged to move that the petition be referred to the Committee on Corporations.

Sir *Henry Hardinge*, after thanking the hon. Baronet for his courtesy in having communicated to him his intention of presenting this petition, observed, that though the petition stated amongst other things that the law had fallen into disrepute owing to the want of respectability of the Aldermen of the borough, yet not one fact or one instance of misconduct in any of the Aldermen was brought forward to prove the statement. The hon. Member had indeed said, that the Duke of Northumberland had appointed his gamekeeper to the office of Alderman; but he must inform the House that the individual alluded to was a person possessing considerable property in the borough, whose father and grandfather had both filled the office before him, and whose only crime was, that, being fond of shooting, the noble Duke had given him a deputation to shoot over his grounds, but the individual did not receive one shilling for his services. The petition also alleged, that the corporate funds, which were considerable, had been misapplied, but not a single instance of misapplication was stated. He did not believe the assertion, for, in the year 1831, when complaints were made in this respect to the Corporation, that body submitted to a full inquiry for any period that the parties thought proper. That inquiry was gone into by Mr. Pearce, an attorney, whose name appeared first to this petition, and another gentleman; and though they went back into the accounts for a period of upwards of twenty years, the result was that not a single instance of misapplication or abuse could be found. The petition was got up to serve electioneering purposes by Mr. Pearce, who had been the consider the propriety of doing so in a Committee of the whole House, and not with the Speaker in the Chair.

Sir *Robert Inglis* objected to the House entertaining the proposition at all, and whether the Motion were for leave to bring in a Bill, or for the House to resolve itself into a Committee, he was disposed to oppose it. He certainly was of opinion that the sense of the House should be taken on the question that the Speaker do leave the Chair.

The *Speaker* said, the proposition was merely for a Committee, as it would be for a Committee to consider whether the House should be recommended to take any measures.

Sir *Robert Inglis* protesting against the principle of the measure, would not farther oppose the going into a Committee.

The House resolved itself into a Committee; Mr. Warburton in the Chair.

Mr. *Robert Grant* said, it now became his duty to propose the following Resolution:—"That it is expedient to remove all civil disabilities at present existing affecting his Majesty's subjects of the Jewish religion, with the like exceptions as are provided with reference to his Majesty's subjects professing the Roman Catholic religion." The disabilities under which the Jews laboured were very nearly the same as affected the Roman Catholics at the time of passing the bill for their emancipation. He was desirous to remove the Jews from the situation in which they now were, and to place them where the Catholics at present stood. The great principle upon which he rested his case and which he frequently advocated in that House, he took to be this—that in every civilized and properly-regulated community no man ought to be excluded, as a general rule, from any civil right or privilege on account of his religious sentiments being different from those of the community at large, unless those sentiments threatened the disorganization of civil society. Unless that exception could be made out, a man's religious opinions ought not to operate as a reason against his enjoying any civil right or privilege. Now, if any one could show to him any other religious community, under the same circumstances, whose conduct was as correct and peaceable as that of the Jews, he would be perfectly content to second a motion for their relief. When he formerly introduced this subject, he had been reproached by an hon. Gentleman for taking up the cause of Judaism before he had advocated that of a class of Christians—the Quakers. On that occasion he immediately rose and stated that, whenever that hon. Member brought forward a Motion in favour of that sect who were called Quakers, he would be happy to second it. He was glad that the House had saved him that trouble, having, *per saltum*, and by anticipation, conferred on a member of that body one of the greatest constitutional privileges. A noble friend of his had already given notice of a Motion affecting that body, and he hoped that the House would be equally inclined to accede to that Motion, and the one he had the honour to propose. In laying down the principle that religious dissent ought not to constitute a ground for exclusion from civil office, he felt himself in much the same situation as if he were enforcing any other political axiom, of which the attempt to prove it was in some degree to shake its certainty. He held this principle as the very foundation of all political society—namely, that men who were united together in society combined for common objects—they were bound to make common exertions, to sustain common burthens, in order to support the existing system of society, and along with the liability to these exertions and burthens there should be a common liability to all honours and privileges. When men united to obtain a common object, and shared a common danger, it was but just, that they should be equally eligible to the common offices and honours of the society. Upon every general ground of expediency—upon every principle which led men to unite, their specific differences should not be further abrogated, nor should particular differences be further obtruded than was necessary to obtain the common object, and all the offices which did not involve some principle inimical to the general principle of the common good should be open alike to all who shared the common danger. To deny to a small minority any of those privileges or offices upon political grounds was oppression—to deny them upon religious grounds was persecution—and to practise either oppression or persecution was not only contrary to reason, and the principle on which society was formed, it was contrary to the spirit of that religion which was invoked on this occasion to justify the exclusion, which came to bring peace on earth and good-will to all mankind. The Jews whose claims he advocated came strictly within these general principles. They were not a narrow and unknown sect, the birth of yesterday. Their principles were well known, and their sacred books were venerated by ourselves. Throughout their whole history they had distinguished themselves as an orderly, industrious, obedient, and religious people. Their morals were unimpeachable; the principles of their morals and of our own were the same. In political principles and moral and loyal conduct the Jews evinced that they had common interests with ourselves. Was it just that they should be excluded from common honours? The Jew had manifestly an interest in the state which afforded him protection—let him enjoy office, and so render his interest deeper. The Jew was interested in defending the country which contained his family and property—open to him the army and navy. The Jew was as deeply interested in the laws of the country as the Christian—place him upon the bench, if qualified. The Jew was interested in upholding the King and Constitution—let him serve the king as his other subjects did. Finally, the Jew having a common interest in the State, throw open to him those doors; and when he appeared at the Table, ask from him no passport but the choice of a competent body of free constituents. He had been once asked, "where, after the emancipation of the Jews, will be the great constitutional rule of law, that Christianity is part of the common law of the land?" He replied that the rule would stand in the same position as before—it would stand without the slightest alteration. It was well known, however, that the rule did not now receive the construction which had heretofore been given to it—that it was now looked upon in a common sense manner—it now received a better and more liberal explanation. Formerly the rule meant not only that Christianity should be observed in the land, but that every servant of the State should be of that religion which was established. That was the meaning of the rule in all our ancient writers—in all our ancient law books. The rule now meant that Christianity was professed, sincerely professed, by the majority of the community, and that they would suffer no individual to villify the doctrines, or obstruct or trample on the great principles of its morality. That was the doctrine laid down by our Mansfields—that was the sense in which the rule was interpreted by modern writers—and that was, he believed, the common sense of the rule. After this measure was passed, Christianity would still be under the protection of the law, it would be supported in dignity and its observance would be maintained. Then, it was said, how can you, after having passed this Bill, call the Parliament a Christian Parliament? He would answer that question by asking another. "Is the Parliament now a Christian Parliament? Are you able, consistently with the present toleration of a small minority of Jews, to call yourselves a Christian nation? If you are, notwithstanding representatives of that minority so tolerated shall be admitted to this House, you will be as much a Christian Parliament in name as ever, and a little more so in spirit." He could not but caution hon. Gentlemen against pleading objections to this subject, in the name of Christianity, which strenuously opposed and denounced all oppression and religious intolerance—its name and its motto being charity to all men. However, there had been objections made to the emancipation of the Jews, by those who admitted the great principle of civil and religious liberty which he had sought to establish. These objections proceeded upon two grounds—the first was political, the other religious. First, in reference to the political ground of exclusion, it was said, that there was something in the doctrine and disposition of this particular class of religionists which rendered it improper that the rights of citizenship should be conferred on them by any nation in which they might be located, inasmuch as the spirit of citizenship was wanting in the bosoms of the Jews. It was said, that the Jews were preoccupied with a spirit of patriotism, not towards the country which afforded them protection, but for a distant country, towards which they looked for restoration at some period undefined and hidden in the mysteries of futurity; and, therefore, that the country of their casual residence should not admit them to its bosom on a principle of equality with other subjects. He would presently offer a satisfactory answer to this allegation; meanwhile he must observe, that the extent to which feelings of personal dislike of the Jews were carried by many was extraordinary, and almost too ludicrous to mention. An hon. gentleman, not now a Member of the House, once said, that he could not contemplate the possibility of being on dining terms with the Jews, and seemed to think that his own repugnance in this respect constituted a satisfactory reason for excluding such individuals from Parliament, His hon. friend was in a lamentable state of ignorance on this subject, as many Members present were aware, who could testify, from personal experience, that the cookery of the Jews was not the worst thing about them. But the whole argument which proceeded to exclude the Jews from civil office on the ground of antipathy was a complete *non sequitur*. If you do not like the Jews, that may be a very good reason for banishing them the country, but it is bad logic to say, " we dislike the Jews in private life, and, therefore, will not admit them into public offices." Now, with respect to the supposed anti-social principles of the Jews, the most sacred of their books had told them to " Seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it; for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace." This principle was fully recognized by the Jews in the time of Napoleon, who, wishing to confer the rights of citizenship upon the Jews, consulted some of the leading men among them in order to ascertain whether their tenets would warrant him in adopting such a measure, and the result was satisfactory in all respects. The report made to him by the great Council or Sanhedrim, dated Paris, 1812, contained the following assurances:—'That the law given by Moses to the ' children of Israel enjoins it as their duty ' to consider as their brethren the individuals ' of all those nations which acknowledge a ' God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, ' and among which they enjoy the advan' tage of civil society, or even hospitality ' and protection. That the Holy Scripture ' commands us " to love our neighbours like ' ourselves;" and that since we regard it ' as in conformity with the will of God ' (which is justice itself), " to do to others ' as we would that others should do to us," ' it would be contrary to these sacred maxims ' not to consider our fellow-citizens both in ' France and Italy as our brethren. That, ' according to this doctrine, of which the ' truth is universally recognized both by ' those teachers who have most authority ' among the Israelites, and by every Israelite ' who is not ignorant of the principles of ' his religion, it is the duty of all to help, ' to protect, and to love their fellow-citi' zens, and to treat them as they would ' treat their co-religionists in every thing ' that concerns the civil and moral relations ' of life. That since the Mosaic religion ' commands the Israelites to receive with so ' much benevolence and respect every ' stranger who might go to reside in their ' towns, it is still more strictly for them a ' religious principle to nourish those feelings ' towards the individuals of every nation ' which has received them in her bosom, ' which protects them by her laws and arms, ' permits them to worship God according to ' the rites of their faith, and admits them, ' as is now the case in France and the king' dom of Italy, to a participation in all civil ' and political rights. The grand Sanhe' drim declares that every Israelite, born ' and educated in France and in the king' dom of Italy, and admitted to the rights ' of a citizen by the laws of these States, ' is bound by his religion to consider them ' as his country, to serve them, to defend ' them, to obey the laws, and to conform, ' in all his transactions, to the regulations ' of the civil code.' Again, in a " Catechism of the Elements of the Jewish Faith" for the use of the youth of that persuasion, he found the following answer to the question, " whether allegiance is due to the sovereign and laws of the country in which they reside?" " Certainly; as long as the Messiah, our Redeemer, is not come, the king under whose protection we live must be esteemed as a king of Israel; and the country in which we live and are maintained, and under the shadow of whose government we enjoy security and comfort, must be considered in the same light as the land of our forefathers." But it might be said, that their practice was opposed to their precepts; he was prepared, however, to show that the experience of past ages proved that this was a mere prejudice, and that there was no ground for asserting that the Jews did not become good members of that community in which they might reside. He was prepared to show, that the opinion that the Jews are precluded by their faith from becoming as good citizens as any other class, was founded on ignorance of the facts of their history. The Jews were to be found in every nation; and in every nation they were conspicuous for the manner in which they performed their duties as members of the community. The Jews were a scattered people; but experience proved, in every instance, that where they had been allowed, they had become a part of the people among whom they dwell. This was not merely the case in modern times, but instances of it were to be found in the earliest period of their history. He would not take up the time of the Committee by referring to history for many instances. One or two circumstances, however, he must glance at: he need not refer to that memorable example familiar to every one, which occurred to one eminent individual of this people, who fulfilled all the duties of a citizen in the country in which he resided, without forgetting the land of his fathers. He would not refer to other instances in the early history of this people, but pass on to the time of their captivity, when they were severed from their native land, and had to reside in a country, the feelings and opinions of the inhabitants of which were entirely opposed to their own. But, during the period of the Babylonish and Persian captivities, it would be found that the most eminent offices in those two nations were filled by the Jewish captives in such a manner as to command the reluctant admiration of the states in which their lots were cast. At that period, too, the objection of the anti-social nature of the feelings and doctrines of the Jews was urged upon the sovereign of Persia in nearly the same language that was used in the former House of Commons. The King was told, "There is a certain people scattered abroad, and dispersed among thy people, in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people, neither keep they the King's laws; therefore it is not for the King's profit to suffer them. If it please the King, let it be written that they may be destroyed." Now, this was following up the argument properly; but the king, so addressed, was Artaxerxes, who was as good a logician as the great man who addressed him; but, instead of destroying the people objected to, he hanged the objector, and so put an end to the argument. He should be sorry that the precedent should be acted upon, with respect to his hon. friend, the member for the University of Oxford, who, he hoped, would long live to urge—if not his objections to the relief of the Jews—his complaints at their emancipation. But the case he had referred to was not a singular case. Under the Ptolemies of Egypt, and the Seleucidæ of Syria, the Jews served in the highest civil and military offices. He could adduce many instances to show, that notwithstanding the affection which the Jews always manifested for the soil, the country, and the institutions of their forefathers in Palestine, they always acted the part of good citizens in those countries in which they sought protection. At last the final dispersion took place which reduced them to the state in which they had been for nearly 1,800 years. Proceeding from that period, he met with one fact which was the more curious, because a sort of parallel case had occurred in our own time. It was perfectly well known that the emperor Julian called—justly, though harshly, by the name of "apostate," was exceedingly anxious to conciliate the Jews, with a view to the accomplishment of a particular object. He promised to restore them to their country — he attempted to rebuild the Temple of Jerusalem—and he opened his armies to the Jews. This was done partly from aversion to the Christians; but he was also actuated, in part, by a great political motive. His great, indeed almost his only rival in the world, was the Persian monarch; and Julian so acted principally for the purpose of facilitating his meditated attack upon that mighty monarch. The frontier provinces of Mesopotamia were full of Jews; and it was with a view to ensure their good will, and to attach them to his interest, that he treated the Jews with so much distinction. However, the Mesopotamian Jews had been kindly treated by the Persian monarch, and rejected all the blandishments of the Roman emperor, notwithstanding his great and admitted kindness to their brethren. They fought the army of Julian; they impeded its progress, and in the sound citizenship of the Jews of Mesopotamia, Julian met the first check which interrupted his progress, and tended to his final discomfiture, and the overthrow of all his plans. The same result was exemplified, in modern times, in the case of Napoleon. In consequence of his liberal treatment of them, the Jews of France rallied round his standard, and almost hailed him as their appointed deliverer; but on coming to states wherein their brethren had been protected by the Russian sovereigns, notwithstanding the admirable conduct of Napoleon towards the Hebrews, the Jewish citizens of those states continued firm in their allegiance to their original protectors. He would not drag the House through a long historical detail; but there were one or two points which he could not refrain from alluding to. The golden period of the Jewish captivity (as it had been called by Mr. Milman) was when many of them were called to sit in the councils of the sovereign, in whose territories they resided. At that period the Jews were protected by the greatest sovereigns of Europe; and well repaid the favours shown them, by evincing more citizenship than the original inhabitants of the countries into which they were received, by serving their patrons with greater fidelity, and filling office with more efficiency than the natives. About that period, also, the emperor Charlemagne, when he sent on a great occasion an ambassador to the Caliph, Haroun Alraschid, employed as his ambassador a Jewish subject. The same was the case with the celebrated Pope Gregory the Great, who employed them in offices of trust and honour, and encouraged them to become cultivators of the land. But perhaps the most remarkable scene of their glory was Spain, where they not only were admitted to high places, but were the chief agriculturists of the country, and under the Moorish Sovereigns obtained a great name and power in the land. Under the Christian Sovereigns, though excluded from many occupations, the Jews were found amongst the eminent men of the country. After that period began the crusades, which though the dawning of civilization for Europe, were the commencement of persecution for the Jews, and he was sorry to say, that in this persecution France and England led the way. That commenced the iron age of the Jews, as Mr. Milman said; the iron age not from their crimes but from their miseries and their sufferings. The iron of oppression then entered deeply into their souls, and they were exposed to persecution from one end of Europe to the other—they were exposed to atrocities so atrocious, to miseries so miserable, that he would not dwell upon the description, but content himself by this passing allusion to those cruelties, and to state one of its consequences. Their present situation was in part the result of those cruelties. This was a consequence perhaps almost as much to be regretted as the cruelties themselves. The feelings then generated remained to this day, and were indulged to the prejudice of that people. They were no longer exposed to martyrdom; they were not tortured or put upon the rack, but they were exposed to indignities and insults. It was by referring to the cruelties of the nations of Europe at a former period that we defended the insults which were still practised towards the Jews and were among their remaining effects. He had mentioned the conduct of the Jews in Europe, and he would quote a specimen from the farthest part of Asia. Some of them had found refuge in China among a semi-barbarous people when they had been driven from Europe by persecution. The historian of the Jews in recording this fact observed, they were employed in agriculture and traffic. They had cultivated learning with success; and some of them, as is attested by extant inscriptions,—had been highly honoured with the imperial favour, and had attained the rank of Mandarin. One of these inscriptions, bearing date in 1815, praised the Jews for their integrity and fidelity in agricultural pursuits, in traffic in the magistracy and in the army; and for their punctual observance of their own religious ceremonies. It was to be remarked, in particular, that this inscription bore testimony to the industry of the Jews in agricultural pursuits, though here it was said that they were unfit for such pursuits, and only fit to engage in trade or in money lending. He had three or four more proofs of the good conduct of the Jews when emancipated, to which he would advert. It had been found that the emancipation of the Jews in France had answered very well. Napoleon himself had stated that, and it was so well known that it was only necessary to allude to it. A remarkable testimony, however, was borne to the Jews in the Chamber of Deputies, on December 4th, 1830, by M. Merilhou the Minister of public instruction who said "But since the Constituent Assembly placed the Israelites on a footing with other citizens, they have partaken of our glory and misfortunes their blood has flowed in the same fields of battle as ours,—their children have been brought up in the same schools with those of their Christian brethren,—they have imbibed the same principles—adopted the same habits—and have become most deserving citizens." He would add one other testimony, that of M. Charles Dupin, who was well known in this country. In one of his books that gentleman had this passage, "The Hebrews naturalized on our territory by the benefit of our laws, have acquired all the rights of other citizens. The exercise of these rights gives them virtues; they addict themselves to study; for the pursuits of usury they substitute those of industry; and they are Frenchmen in heart as well as by blood." Again, Prince Hardenburgh, the enlightened prime minister of Prussia, had emancipated the Jews in that country in 1811 or 1812. In 1814, two years after the emancipation, Prince Hardenburgh had, in an official letter to the Prussian consul at Hamburgh, borne the highest testimony to their merits. The right hon. Gentleman quoted a part of this letter which stated, 'The history of 'the last war against France, has proved 'that by the most faithful attachment they 'have rendered themselves worthy of the 'state which has incorporated them in its 'bosom. The youth of the Israelite con'fession have been the brethren in arms 'of their Christian fellow-citizens. They 'have also afforded examples of true heroism '—of a glorious contempt for the perils of 'war; and the other Israelite inhabitants, 'especially the women, have rivalled 'Christians wherever it was necessary to 'make sacrifices for their common country." He would quote a similar testimony in favour of them given by the Senate of Hamburgh in 1814. That document stated that during the period that the Jews had enjoyed the rights of citizenship there, and of a perfect equality with the other inhabitants of the state, they had been distinguished for their laudable conduct, and for their great exertions for the public welfare. The testimony which he had already quoted as to their good conduct as subjects and citizens in Prussia was given in 1814. Similar testimonials could be produced as to their good conduct in that kingdom up to the present moment. The House would allow him to quote a testimony of that description in the words of a near relation of his own, writing from Berlin in 1830, when a similar motion to the present was about being brought forward in Parliament. He stated, and this was the evidence of an individual upon whom every reliance could be placed, that there was no portion of the subjects of Prussia better conducted or more deserving citizens than the Jews; that previous to their emancipation there they had, in numerous instances, amassed large sums of money, which they had, since permission was granted them, exchanged for land; that at the present moment a large portion of the land of Prussia was in their hands, and that he would say the Jews in Prussia, were Prussians *par excellence*. One objection—a constant one to the enfranchisement of the Jews—was, that they were not like other subjects,—that the Jews of all countries were bound together by one tie, by a general spirit of common nationality, and that they were therefore not fit persons for admission to the rights of citizenship. He was ready to admit that they were bound together by the tie of oppression, but that tie had been broken in Prussia and in other States, where, upon an admission to an equality with their fellow-subjects, the Jews had proved themselves not unworthy of the concession, and the proposition which he was now about to submit to the Committee was to break that tie in this country by conferring upon the Jews the rights of citizenship. Wherever that had been done the Jews had lost that strong bond of union which was made by oppression and become attached to the country which gave them protection. He would appeal to the highest testimony in proof of the admirable conduct of the Jewish soldiers in the Dutch army during the siege of Antwerp; that testimony was at second hand from General Chassé himself. That gallant officer stated that the Jews under his command were ready to blow up the citadel if he desired them to do so, and that in fact, there were not better soldiers in the army. He could quote innumerable testimonies to the same effect from history past and recent, but he was sure that at the present day it was not necessary for him to heap evidence upon evidence to show that the Jews if admitted to those rights of citizenship which their other fellow-subjects enjoyed, would exhibit in their demeanour and conduct a proper sense of their duties to the Government under which they lived and to the country to which they belonged. What were the arguments by which those just claims of the Jews were met and opposed? He had heard indeed of some arguments against those claims; he had seen them in print, which had shocked him so much that he would not allude to them at present or hereafter, unless he should be compelled to do so by a reiteration of such arguments within the walls of that House. There was, however, one argument which had been pretty extensively advanced against the claims of the Jews, and which, as it was advanced by persons who conscientiously believed in its force, he was anxious to draw the attention of the Committee to it. That argument was founded upon a fact with regard to which all Jews and Christians were agreed—namely, that the Jews were set apart as a peculiar people by Divine Providence, and hence it was argued that as this whole class of persons were, in fulfilment of the Divine prophecies undergoing a special punishment and dispersion, it would not be proper for this House to treat them as other nations of the world, and to admit them to the rights of citizenship. Now, in reply to that argument, he would say, that it was one that proved infinitely too much, for, according to those persons who used it, the proscription which was predicted as affecting this people, and to which they appealed, would not go merely to the extent of civil disabilities, but would go to the sanction of the rack, the stake, the torture, and all other horrible inflictions to which the Jews were subjected in past times, and therefore if it was a right argument to say, that because the Jews, being in a peculiar state of probation, were exposed to certain evils, we, in fulfilment of the prophecies relating to them, had a right to inflict those evils upon them. But then we ought not to stop at the mere imposition of civil disabilities, but we should go back to those horrible tortures and abominations which were in former times put in practice against this unfortunate people, when men took into their hands the fulfilment of the predictions of the Almighty, but which abominable cruelties the humanity and sense of religion that prevailed in modern times would not for a moment endure. But, in point of fact, the argument was in every respect a false one, which appealed to the prophecies relating to the Jews, to show that we were thereby prohibited from doing any thing that might tend to their worldly advantage or promotion. He had, when he addressed the House upon a former occasion upon this question quoted the words of Bishop Newton, which effectually destroyed the sort of barrier which was thus attempted to be raised against the admission of the Jews to civil rights. That eminent ecclesiastic, speaking of those prophecies, said that though the Jews were to be dispersed and persecuted, that would not be a justification for those nations which would inflict sufferings upon them,—that the nations which inflicted evils upon them would suffer for doing so, while all good nations would support them in their days of calamity and misfortune. The words of Bishop Newton were, that charity was greater than faith, and that it would be worse for us to be cruel and uncharitable than to be unbelievers. The extract on this subject which he had formerly read from the celebrated work of Bishop Newton on the prophecies, was an unanswerable refutation of the pretended argument drawn from the prophecies against the admission of the Jews to the civil rights of citizens. He would also quote the authority of Dr. Buchanan, so well known for his antiquarian researches in Asia, and for his extraordinary labours as a missionary, who remarked that the time was come when Parliament should restore the Jews to the franchises of their fellow-citizens for it could certainly do so without contravening the Divine will. He could add, he said, many more quotations to those from the writings of eminent divines, but it was unnecessary, he was sure, for him to do so. He would trouble the House with only one quotation more upon the subject —from the writings of an individual well known to many Members of the House, and one who was worthy of the highest admiration, though a dissenter from the Established Church—he alluded to the reverend Robert Hall. That celebrated man stated that a large arrear of guilt had been contracted by the nations of Christendom, on account of the manner in which they had hitherto, in past times treated the Jews, and that in the present age of liberality, when such mighty efforts were made to procure the repeal of civil disabilities on account of religion, it was time to free the oppressed children of Israel from the bondage which they had endured. He (Mr. Grant) advocated this proposition upon the grounds of justice and toleration alone; but if he were to appeal to feelings, there were strong and powerful feelings to which he could appeal on behalf of the Jews. It should never be forgotten that an immense debt of gratitude was due from the nations of Christendom, and from the professors of Christianity, to the Jews, and it behoved us to discharge that debt in the true spirit of Christianity, in accordance with the divine and charitable precept of doing to others as we would be done by. It would more than one hundred times reward the efforts which he had made on behalf of this cause if he should happen to be the humble instrument of inducing this great and Christian country, acting upon the true and genuine principles of Christianity to communicate to this long oppressed people their just rights and privileges. Doing so would open the eyes of the Jewish people, —it would show them that Christianity and persecution should not be connected, as they had, with some reason, hitherto connected them,—it would prove to them that we were determined to act up to the principles and spirit of that religion which we professed, and that one of the leading principles of that divine creed, the establishment of good-will amongst men, would be our guide and our director for the future. Religion and justice called upon us to adopt such a course, and perhaps the future fortunes of this country depended upon our now extending emancipation to this illustrious and long ill-used and oppressed nation. In their former journey through the wilderness to the land of promise, those nations that afforded them sustenance and relief received the blessing of the Almighty, and now, in their journey through the wilderness of suffering and persecution, we were equally called upon to afford them the offices of good-will and benevolence. He was content to rest this question upon a ground comprehensive enough to contain it, and firm enough to support it—upon the ground of religious toleration. The infliction of civil disabilities without any reason was oppressive, and their infliction for no other reason but a difference of creed was religious persecution. He now, therefore, called upon them to wipe away a stain which had so long attached to their religion—he called upon them as professors of Christianity to wipe away the heavy stain that had so long disfigured its fair fame, and to show it as it was and as it ought to be—the religion of good-will and of charity towards all mankind. It was for such reasons and upon such grounds that he begged leave to propose the following Resolutions to the Committee:—"That it is expedient to remove all civil disabilities at present existing respecting his Majesty's subjects of the Jewish persuasion in like manner, and with the same exceptions, as the disabilities affecting his Majesty's subjects professing the Roman Catholic religion had been removed." The right hon. Gentleman sat down amidst loud cheers.

Sir *Robert Inglis*, in rising to oppose the Motion, said, that his right hon. friend had made much larger concessions, to what he would call the spurious liberality of the age, than he could have ever expected from him, considering the respect which he knew that his right hon. friend entertained for all that belonged to Christianity. In the present instance he was greatly disappointed in the course of argument taken by his right hon. friend, as well as in his whole tone and manner. So fastidious was his right hon. friend, that he almost hesitated to call the well-known Julian an "apostate," who, from first being a Christian, afterwards turned, and became a most zealous Pagan. [Mr. Grant, across the Table, said he had merely used the phrase "justly, though harshly."] The fastidiousness, however, of the reservation was, he could not but think, ill-omened in the commencement of a discussion on such a subject as the present. His right hon. friend had laid it down as a general proposition, that religious opinions should not disqualify their professors from the holding of political power. Now, instead of setting forth with such a general proposition, his right hon. friend should have confined it to the religious opinions of the persons whose claims he at present advocated, and he should have said that their religious opinions did not disqualify them from holding power. For if the more general proposition were to be admitted, and it was upon it that his right hon. friend grounded his Motion, it would enable the Parsee, the Brahmin, the Mussulman, the Jew, and all other sectaries and religionists whatever, who were natural born subjects of the King of this realm, to participate in all the rights of British subjects; and he would ask, whether they would be fit persons to be intrusted with all the ecclesiastical as well as civil interests of England? If such a principle were to be carried, the effect of it would be to place in the custody of very incompetent and unworthy men all the dearest interests of this country. It was not from any personal feeling towards the Jews that he opposed their emancipation—it was not upon the ground of their greater immorality, or their greater unworthiness as members of society, that he resisted their claims on this occasion—on the contrary, he believed that there was no portion of the community that furnished a smaller relative proportion of criminals, or that was better conducted than the Jews were; and this, under circumstances, which, as he admitted (whatever use might be made of his admission), were too often unfavourable to moral character. He regarded it as an established principle—a principle that had been the boast of the Constitution of this country—that Christianity was part and parcel of the law of England. His right hon. friend must admit that it would no longer continue to be so, if the Bill which he proposed should (which God forbid) become the law of the land. His right hon. friend had, indeed, acknowledged that in that case the maxim could not be taken in the ordinary sense in which it had hitherto been applied; but then he said that the Legislature would practically be as much Christian as it was before, and that it would never be found that those who would be thus admitted into it would be inclined, in that House, to treat the Christian ceremonies and belief with disrespect. Without entering further into that part of the subject, he would say that his experience during the last three years fully justified him in expressing his doubts upon it, seeing the respect that had been shown to their attachment to peculiar doctrines and peculiar institutions on the part of those from whom such forbearance and respect had been continually predicated before they had been placed in that House. The nationality of the Jews was a strong argument against their admission to the rights now claimed for them. Would his right hon. friend disclaim on the part of the Jews the nationality which they claimed? Would he produce any Jew who would disclaim it? Place them in Poland, in Prussia, in France, in Algiers, in China, they still regarded themselves as a separate nation, and they would resist the conferring of any benefit upon them, founded upon a renunciation upon their parts of that claim to a distinct national character. His right hon. friend had referred—for it was evident that to it he alluded—to the promotion of Joseph in Egypt and Daniel in Babylon as a proof that the Jews had been advanced to high stations in former times; but their promotion in the courts of Egypt and Babylon was a miraculous promotion for the purpose of carrying into effect the will of the Almighty; and no argument could be drawn from the fact to show that a Christian people should now admit Jews to place and power, unless his right hon. friend could prove that his clients were qualified in the same miraculous way as their ancestors, who had been raised to such high situations in the courts of Pharaoh and Cyrus. His right hon. friend had rapidly passed from ancient history down to modern times. If he might without levity refer to it, he could not help thinking, while his right hon. friend was giving the history of the Jews from the deluge, of a reverend speaker in a popular work, who always began with the cosmogony; nor could he forget, while looking at the rapid manner in which his right hon. friend was travelling over ancient history generally, the "Sir, the Chaldæans—sir, the Babylonians," in the speech of Temple Luttrell, in "Anticipation." But the question was not one of lightness. He would, therefore, resume his course, and follow his right hon. friend to modern times, and to his case from Poland. He (Sir R. Inglis) apprehended that the case of Poland was not the one in which the allegiance of the Jews had stood the trial best, for, in that instance, though the subjects of Russia, they notoriously aided the escape and retreat of Buonaparte. We had no record of the period when the Jews first came over to this country; but he could not be ignorant—indeed every school-boy must be aware—that they were to be found in England for centuries previous to the two last. He was aware of the cruelties and persecutions inflicted on that body in the reigns of Henry 3rd, Richard 1st, and of King John. It was not his intention to lead the Committee into any antiquarianism upon the subject, or to quote the laws then enforced; suffice it to say, that, having been driven from the country, they returned again in the reign of Charles 2nd. But they returned solely for their own purposes and speculations. Did they, he would ask, at that period, stipulate for any privileges or immunities for their body? No; they took the law as they found it, as they were bound to do, coming as they did as strangers among us. And strangers they must continue to be—they must ever remain a distinct and separate nation; and was the Legislature—were the House of Commons—to unchristianise themselves and the country, in order to afford unnecessary privileges to these few persons? What right had a foreigner going into any country to find fault with the laws of that country, and pray their alteration in his favour, he being no more than a stranger and a sojourner? And strangers and sojourners the Jews must be until the restoration of their own Jerusalem—their ultimate home. At all periods of the history of this country it was the invariable practice to place all power and authority, of whatever description, in the hands of persons professing the principles of Christianity. There never was a period at which the contrary was the case. No power of any description had ever been intrusted to any man or set of men who were not required to swear their fealty to their King upon that sacred book, which we, as Christians, revere, but which the Jews despise. That oath had always been taken on the holy Gospel, or on a crucifix—in short, on something which was held sacred at the time by Christians, but which the Jews have at all times held in abhorrence. But it appeared that the solemn words, "As I am a true Christian," were to be given up for the present. The introduction of this measure, on the 5th of April, 1830, was the first time it was proposed to remove the political disabilities, as they were called, under which the Jews laboured, or in other words, to confer civil power upon any class of persons in this country, unless those who called themselves, and professed to be, Christians. He recollected the history of the Jew Bill of 1753; but that was not a measure introduced for the purpose of conferring political power; its object was, the naturalization of foreign

Jews. He would call upon his right hon. and learned friend (Mr. Grant), to state whether, before the year 1830, he had ever known any attempt made to give political power to any persons in this country, save to those who professed their belief in the records of our common Christianity, whose love of the Scriptures of God were founded in a belief in Christ? It had ever been a maxim of the Legislature, as well as of our Courts of Justice, that religion was part and parcel of the law of the land; but it would no longer be so if persons were to obtain seats in that House, and on the Judicial Bench, who believed that Christianity was a mockery. He maintained, that man living in society had no abstract right to power; he had a right to protection for his person, protection for his property, and protection for his religion, but he had no abstract right to the possession of any power above his fellow man. It had never been held, that man had an abstract unalienable right to political power; and unless it could be shown that the Jews in this country were insecure in their property, or unprotected in their persons or their religion, he would not allow that they were denied any right which they were entitled to claim. Were they prepared to place a Jew upon the Judicial Bench, where, perhaps, his first act would be to try a person for blasphemy? Was that Judge a fit person to preside in such a case, who held—he (Sir R. Inglis) spoke it with reverence—that Jesus Christ himself was an impostor? Was this the doctrine of the Jews, or was it not? And, if so, ought a Jew to preside in a Court of Justice in such a case? Let him not be told that in such a case a Jew might be a Juryman; if he were he might be challenged; but was he to sit and try a case, he believing in doctrines for the very enunciation of which the accused was to be brought before him? Some stress had been laid on the practice of other countries; but that was a very imperfect criterion of the fitness or unfitness of the present measure as it regarded this country. Upon this point he agreed to a certain extent with what had been laid down by the hon. member for Oldham, who, he understood, was prevented by illness from being present as he intended at that discussion. With reference to what had been said of Jews holding seats in the Legislature, he would observe that there was considerable difference in the construction of different Legislatures, and that a seat in the Legislature of this country was of infinitely more importance than a seat in the Chamber of Deputies in France, or in the Congress of the United States of America; and what was considered right in both the one and the other might be found to be exceedingly wrong and impolitic here. But, after all, was there a single Jew who held a seat in the Chamber of Deputies in Paris, or in the Congress of the United States of America? He was not aware that there was even one in either country. If the principle now proposed were adopted, they would go on altering the oath by little and little, at the recommendation of the supporters of this and that different sect of persons, until they at length came to a decision (and he had heard the doctrine broached more than once that Session) that they ought to have no oaths at all. The hon. member for Middlesex appeared, by his cheer, to adopt this doctrine. He would ask the hon. Member if it had not ever been the case that persons taking office, and filling a public situation, of whatever kind, were called upon to take certain oaths to preserve their allegiance to their King, and secure the stability of the Government? And if once they were to dispense with those oaths for the security of the Constitution, the next step would be short and easy, by which they would get rid of the obligation of an oath in every instance. The question was not whether they would tolerate this or that set of persons, but whether they were to get rid of the religion of the country altogether as the sanction and principle of human action? It would be insulting, and certainly was far from his wish or intention, to put into the mouth of any hon. Member, words stronger than those he had used. But he had understood, from the cheer of the hon. member for Middlesex, that he was anxious for the abolition of all oaths, and therefore it was, that he had put the question as to how the existence of society was to be secured without the administration of oaths; and he must add that, by the removal of all oaths, they would get rid altogether of religion, as the sanction of human action. But he would suppose, for the present, that the oath was to be retained; yet he found that the words "on the faith of a Christian" were to be removed. He would ask the Committee whether they were prepared to renounce that declaration? Were they prepared to admit to that Table a Jew, who, in the profession of his own religion, declared that religion to be right and theirs to be wrong? Were they prepared to go this length in order that certain privileges might be extended to a comparatively small number of persons—privileges, too, which he maintained they had no claim to, either individually or as a body? He repeated that he would not deny them justice; but justice had been already fully extended to them in the fullest protection of their persons, property, and religion. Upon all these grounds he felt bound to resist the proposition of his right hon. friend.

Mr. *Macaulay* said, that when the question was formerly discussed, it was observed by a common friend of the hon. Baronet and of himself, a friend whom they both loved, and whose loss they had in common deeply deplored, that it was difficult to make a speech in favour of the Jews without weakening their cause by advocating truths which admitted of no question. Nothing, however, he must confess, which had happened since that period seemed at all calculated to alter the situation in which they were placed. Conscious of this, his hon. friend the member for the University of Oxford, had begun by entirely disclaiming all intention of calling in question the great principles of religious liberty, on which the measure in favour of the Jews was to be founded, had attempted to shake off the burthen of proving their case from his own party, and to place it upon those who advocated the cause of toleration. He had argued, that the conferring of political power upon any particular class of individuals was a matter of grace, not of right; that the distribution of that power being in the hands of the supreme authority in every country, no one had a right to complain, whatever distribution the supreme authorily might choose to make; that persons had no right even to ask on what grounds some were endowed with privileges to the exclusion of others: a doctrine so monstrous, if carried to its extreme extent, that every reasonable man would shrink from expounding it. Was the right hon. Baronet prepared to say, then, that it would be right for the supreme authority to enact that no man should be admitted to political rights unless he were six feet high, or unless he possessed some other capricious qualification of a similar nature? Would not such a regulation, even according to the hon. Baronet, be gross injustice? Yet such would be the logical consequences of his argument, that the supreme authority had a right to dispose of political power to whom it chose. Suppose the Government of India chose to say that no man should have the direction of Government at Calcutta, at Bombay, or Madras, who had been educated at the University of Oxford; would the hon. Baronet consider that a just law? Would he be satisfied by his own doctrine, that political power was a matter of grace and favour? Suppose they were to enact that no man should be Governor General unless he had been born at Southampton, would that be a right principle in the opinion of the hon. Baronet? Did the hon. Baronet argue, that such tests as these might be enjoined with propriety by the supreme authority in any country? As well might they adopt at once the Indian principle of castes. But the hon. Baronet asked whether it was the wish of the supporters of the proposed measure to do away with all religious sanctions in the conduct of human affairs? To that inquiry his answer was this:—There was one principle which lay at the bottom of all religion—a principle which formed the basis of all the rules of religion and morality, both in public and private life. He would ask the hon. Baronet himself whether any principle were more strongly sanctioned by religion than that by which every man was to study to the utmost of his abilities the happiness of his fellow-creatures—that no man should inflict the slightest evil on his fellow, or be instrumental in withdrawing from him the slightest degree of happiness? The real question then was, whether the withholding of political power from any particular class of individuals were not inflicting a useless pain upon those who were subjected to such disabilities—a pain which ought not to be inflicted, unless those who were instrumental in continuing those disabilities could show that some great advantage was derived from them? As Christians, they were bound to regulate their conduct by that great rule which the founder of our religion declared comprehended all the law and the prophets—to love our neighbours as ourselves. As Christians he would assert that they were bound to remove the disabilities as soon as possible. And what was the argument against the removal? Why, that, if Jews were admitted, Mussulmans, Parsees, and Brahmins might obtain seats in that House; and the House was asked whether it would concede that privilege to persons who denied the authority of the Gospel? He would answer that question by another. He asked his hon. friend was he prepared to roast an unbeliever at a slow fire? If not, let him say why; and he would engage to prove that his reasons were just as decisive against the intolerance of which he was guilty, as against that from which he shrunk with horror. Admitting the principle of persecution where were they to stop—why at one point rather than at another? Why at the point fixed upon by the hon. member for Oxford, rather than at that selected by the hon. member for Oldham, who would refuse Jews the privilege of possessing land? Why at that point, even, rather than at the point at which a Spanish inquisitor of the sixteenth century would have been inclined to stop? When once a person entered on the course of persecution, he was led on by imperceptible steps to the extreme point. The hon. Baronet, when he contended for the exclusion of Jews from political power, ought to recollect that this power was not confined to the privilege of sitting in Parliament. In all countries political power goes with property. Was then the hon. Baronet disposed to touch the property of the Jews? He apprehended not; but the hon. member for Oldham was so disposed, and he had much to say in favour of his view on the principle laid down by the hon. Baronet. If you deprive the Jew of parliamentary influence, it seemed to follow, as a consequence, that you should deprive him of his landed property which was closely connected with that influence. If you touched his landed property, why respect his funded property? If you take his property, why not his liberty; and if his liberty, why not his life? In controversies between persecutors the difference was only as to degree. Those who would resort to the rack and the stake as a mode of persecution might say much for their views. Their intolerance possibly effect its end. There were, instances in history, in which religious dissent had been suppressed by bloody persecution. In that way the Albigenses were put down. In that way Protestantism was suppressed in Spain, so that it had never since raised its head; but he defied any person to show an instance in which petty exclusions, such as were now under consideration had had any other effect than that of irritating the sect against which they were directed. The hon. member for Oxford had no right to maintain his argument against the Emancipation of the Jews, unless he was prepared to go the whole length of the inquisition. It was absurd to say, that the deprivation of civil rights was not persecution; it gave pain, and persecution could do no more. There were many Members in that House, who, rather than be subject to the disabilities under which the Jews laboured would be imprisoned half a year, or pay a fine of 500*l.* On what principle, then, had his hon. friend a right to say, that these disabilities were not persecution, and that fine and imprisonment were persecution? All the reasoning of his hon. friend consisted in drawing arbitrary lines; the pain which he would inflict was not persecution; all pain beyond that which he would inflict was persecution. Again, his hon. friend drew an arbitrary line with respect to political power. He said, "this which I allow them to possess is not political power, but that which I withhold from them is political power." How was it possible, to leave men in possession of vast property, and yet deprive them of political power? There was nothing to prevent a Jew from possessing all the 10*l.* houses in a borough, or from having more 50*l.* tenants-at-will, than any nobleman in a county. If he possessed a million of money, was he not now as well able to give treats to please the palates of voters, and to hire bands of gipsies to break their heads, as if he were a Christian and a Marquess? Consider, for one moment, where could the line be drawn? You say a Jew might have the power of returning Members to Parliament, but he must not sit in Parliament; he might be a Juryman, but not a Judge; he might give damages, but not grant new trials; he might not be a Privy Councillor, but he might be a man of vast importance in the money market of this country, and control the exchanges; nay, a Jew might be summoned to attend a congress of sovereigns, and instead of being used like one of his ancestors—placed in a chair and subjected to the operation of a dentist—might be treated on equal terms, and supplicated to furnish the Allied Powers of Europe with the means of carrying on mighty operations. Still a Jew must not be a Member of Parliament. It was said, that the interdict of the Almighty rested upon the Jews, and that we were opposing his will in endeavouring to place them upon an equal footing with the Christians; but the Supreme Being will distinguish between substance and form—he will see that whilst we pretend to withhold political power from the Jews in form, we, in fact, allow them to possess it in reality. Why draw this line between outward form and semblance, and real substance and meaning? Those who opposed the removal of the disabilities of the Jews on the grounds advanced by the hon. member for the University of Oxford, were making a compromise between the principle of persecution and the principle of toleration. The hon. Member, finding that his own good feeling and the spirit of the age, were too strong to allow him to follow out his principle to the full length, drew an arbitrary line, and said that all which lies on one side of it was persecution, and all upon the other only necessary caution and restriction. The hon. Member said "this pain I will inflict, and therefore, I do not chose to call it persecution. This power I will withhold, and therefore I do not choose to call it political power. Jews may possess great weight in the legislative and in the executive Government, but that I do not choose to call political power; and that, therefore, I will concede to them." Those who formerly cut off Jews' heads, dragged them at horses tails, and burnt them on slow fires, were men of a different spirit from my hon. friend, the member for the University of Oxford—they had none of his humanity; but they were more consistent. It was said, that it would be an anomaly to see a Jewish Judge trying a man for blasphemy. He would not defend the present law relative to blasphemy; but a sound law upon the subject might exist with an enlightened Jew upon the Bench. Every man ought to be at liberty to discuss the truth or falsehood of religion, but not to force upon the unwilling eyes and ears of others sights and sounds which are insulting to them. The distinction was perfectly clear; if a man chose to sell *Paine's Age of Reason* in a back shop to such as thought proper to buy it, or if another man chose to deliver a lecture against religion in a private room, neither of them ought to be prosecuted; but if an individual exhibited at his window, in a public thoroughfare, a hideous caricature of what is an object of veneration and respect to 999 out of 1000 of his fellow-citizens; or if he, in places of public resort, should apply outrageous expressions against that religion or against that being which ninety-nine out of a hundred of those around him were accustomed to regard with reverence, he ought to be punished, not for a libel, but for a nuisance; not for attacking that which we knew to be true, but for giving pain and disgust to his neighbours. Such a man was no more entitled to offer a gross insult to religion, and say, that he had a right to freedom of opinion, than another man would have to establish a noisome and offensive manufacture in any neighbourhood, and say that he had a right to his property; or to run up and down the streets naked, and say that he had a right to locomotion. What was the principle by which all civilized nations were regulated with respect to the rights of burial? That the law should protect the remains of the dead from insult. In the legislative regulations with repect to dissections, which had lately been made in this country, a provision was introduced to prevent the feelings of the friends and relations of the deceased, from being outraged; and surely the same right which a man had, that his father's body should not be treated with indignity for the sake of science, he also had, that his religious feelings towards his Maker should not be outraged under the pretence of freely discussing the principles of religion. There appeared to him to be no difficulty in the case. If that which he had just stated was the rule, he could not see why a Jew, who was appointed to the Bench, could not conscientiously administer that rule. It was a rule which was as applicable to any false, but tolerated religion as it was to the true religion itself. If, for instance, at Malta, which was now subject to us, the practice were renewed of burning the Pope in effigy, on the anniversary of Queen Elizabeth's accession to the Throne; or, if at Madras or Calcutta any gross insult were offered to the religion of the natives, he should certainly, were he a Magistrate in any of those places, feel no difficulty in interfering, and punishing the offenders. He would suppress such offences against the inhabitants. And, on the same principle, he was convinced that no conscientious Jew on the Bench would say that a gross outrage to the religion of this country deserved not punishment. But no charge could be brought against the Jews of evincing any disposition to attack the Christian religion, or to offend its professors. It was true that one imputation of such a nature had lately been thrown out in that House, but it was entirely unfounded. He had seen a great deal of the worship of the Jews, and he had heard a great deal upon the subject from others; and, from all that he had seen, and all that he had heard, he was able to say, without the slightest fear of contradiction, that there was no part of the Jewish worship, which was not only not insulting to Christians, but in which Christians might not, without the least difficulty, join. There was nothing in the religious doctrines of the Jews which was calculated to render them either bad subjects or bad neighbours. Their Decalogue was the same as ours—the foundation of all their moral law was the same as ours. It had been contended by his hon. friend (the member for the University of Oxford), that the existence of the Prophecies, which doomed the Jews to be miserable wanderers over the face of the earth, was an argument against the adoption of the measure proposed by his right hon. and learned friend. He felt himself capable of proving, to absolute demonstration, that nothing could be more futile than such a supposition. If those Prophecies meant that the Jews should never, while as a nation they continued to wander over the face of the earth, be placed on perfect equality in civil rights with the people among whom they might happen to live, those Prophecies were false. For it was a fact, that throughout the United States of America Jews enjoyed an equal participation of civil rights with the Americans themselves; and it was clear, therefore, either that the Prophecies were demonstrably false, or that those who put the construction on them to which he had just alluded utterly misapprehended their true character. As to the ultimate return to Jerusalem anticipated by the Jews, it was scarcely necessary for him to observe, that remote events, and especially events which were to occur at an indefinite time, seldom possessed much influence over the conduct of men. If distant and contingent events possessed any powerful influence, they should possess it over Christians as well as over Jews; for Christians all expected great changes; none supposed that the present state of things would last for ever; and there was one large class which confidently anticipated the near approach of the Millenium. There was one important point in which the Jews had a great advantage over the professors of any other religion which we believe to be false. There was not the slightest chance that their doctrines would spread. It was notorious that the Jews did not wish to make proselytes—nay, they almost rejected them, and seemed to think it culpable presumption in any one who did not belong to their race, to aspire to belong to their religion. Under these circumstances, it was not at all extraordinary that the conversions from Christianity to Judaism was at least as rare an occurrence as a total eclipse of the Sun. He had never heard but of one such conversion, and that was a very remarkable case. He alluded to the instance of Lord George Gordon. Now, if there was any convert of which a proselytizing sect would have been proud, it was that individual—not only because he was a man of high rank and large property, and a member of the Legislature, but because he had been distinguished by the intolerance and ferocity of the zeal with which he had advocated his own peculiar doctrines of Christianity. But how had Lord George Gordon been treated after his admission by his new friends? He was reluctantly and slowly initiated in all the painful ceremonials of the Jewish religion; but when, on his death-bed, he talked of the rites of burial, according to the Jewish form, he was told that those rites could not be granted to him. That was not a religion likely to make many proselytes; those who professed so much zeal for Christianity might be pleased that such was its character. It should be at least a motive to assent to this measure for the Jews were not likely to increase their numbers by conversions. But the House had been told, that the Jews were an unsocial people—that they would enter into no friendly communications with their neighbours. Thus, that very peculiarity in their character which protected Christianity from the danger of any attempts on their part of making proselytes, was produced against them in another shape as a charge. It was strange to compare the manner in which the question for the Emancipation of the Catholics had been argued with the manner in which the question for the Emancipation of the Jews was now argued. When the Emancipation of the Catholics was opposed, the Catholics were described as restless, insinuating, insatiable; as prepared to take every advantage, and to adopt whatever measures might be calculated to give them an ascendancy. It was stated that, social learned, artful, clever individuals of their body were constantly employed as emissaries for the purpose of corrupting the religious faith of the various countries to which they were sent; that, to carry that great object into effect, they pretended to employ themselves in making astronomical observations for the emperor of China, and in imparting the lights of civilization to the natives of Paraguay; that go where you would you would find Catholic Priests earnestly engaged in attempting the conversion of the members of other religions to their own faith. But now, when the question related to the toleration of a religion, the professors of which never attempted to make proselytes, and were not content with having a separate religion unless they could live in a separate family, that very circumstance was turned against them; they were charged with being unsocial, and on that charge was founded the refusal to admit them to a participation of political power. The fact was, however, that bigotry and intolerance never wanted arms, however much they might want, whenever it was thought desirable, to attack the character of a religious sect. Let it be proposed to tolerate any sect whatever, and to that sect the most dangerous qualities would, be, for the time, attributed. As to the charge of unsociability brought against the Jews, it was true, as it regarded their religion; and that was an additional security to which it might otherwise be supposed the Christian religion would be exposed by the admission of the Jews to civil rights. But that they were unsociable in their political capacity and as neighbours, had not been proved, and without proof was not to be believed. His right hon. and learned friend had produced a great mass of testimony to show that such was not the case; upon which testimony his hon. friend, the member for the University of Oxford, had made no impression whatever. But the charge if true was applicable not to the character of Jews alone, but to the character of all persecuted sects which had existed in various nations. From the reign of Queen Elizabeth down to the Revolution, the Catholics in this country had evinced much greater confidence and attachment in Foreign Princes than in their own. It was a saying of Cromwell's that all Catholics in England were Espagniolised. It might have been said at a subsequent period, when France became the chief Catholic power, that they were Gallicised. In consequence of this constant recurrence to foreign powers, the Catholics had a religious patriotism, which was separate from their national patriotism. It was the same thing with the Calvinists. When the Calvinists in this country were persecuted, they were constantly looking to the Calvinists of France for support. In France, on the other hand, the Huguenots thought the English Protestants much more their countrymen than French Catholics. In this country we had abolished all invidious religious distinctions respecting Catholics and Calvinists, and the consequence was, that if England were invaded to-morrow, neither Catholic nor Calvinist would trouble his head to consider whether the invaders were the most bigotted Catholics or the most bigotted Calvinists. Why not try the same experiment with the Jews? Why not try the same experiment which had been tried in France and Prussia, and which was now trying in the United States of America? Why not, if the Jews were supposed to be an unsocial and disloyal class of men, convert them by such a humane scheme into a social and loyal class of men? The only other main charge which had been brought against the Jewish character had not been brought by his hon. friend, the member for the University of Oxford, for his hon. friend had too much knowledge and taste to bring such a charge, but it had been brought by others. It had been brought by the hon. member for Oldham, whom he was sorry not to see in his place. It had been stated by that hon. Member, that the Jews were a mean race, that they were a sordid race, that they were a money-getting race, that they were averse to all honourable pursuits, and fit for nothing but those of usury—an occupation to which they sacrificed all patriotic feelings and all social affections. He believed, that this would be found to be another example of that logic of bigotry and intolerance which had been manifested in all ages, and which having in the first instance generated vices, then made those vices a plea for persecution. If England had been to the Jews only half a country, how could we expect from the Jews feelings of more than half patriotism? They had always treated the Jews as foreigners, and they now wondered that the Jews did not feel as natives. They had driven the Jews to live by mean occupations, and they now wondered they did not cultivate honourable toils. They prevented the Jews from possessing an acre of land, and they now complained that the Jews devoted themselves entirely to trade. They debarred the Jews from the pursuits of honourable ambition, and they now reproached them for taking refuge in the employments of avarice. For many ages they had inflicted injustice upon the Jews, and they were then surprised that the Jews had recourse to the artifice and cunning which were the invariable defences of the weak against the overwhelming power of the strong. Those who opposed the emancipation of the Jews were sufficiently acquainted with the Jewish History to know that the vices and imperfections now charged against the Jews were not natural to the Jewish character. There was nothing in that character which incapacitated them from discharging the highest duties of citizenship. In the earliest ages of civilization, when all other countries of the earth were still in a state of barbarism — when letters and arts were yet unknown in Athens—when scarcely a hut stood on the spot which was afterwards to be Rome, this despised nation had made large conquests, possessed great political power, established numerous manufactures, carried on an extensive commerce, had erected splendid temples and palaces, and boasted of eminent statesmen, warriors, philosophers, historians, and poets. What nation had ever more manfully exerted itself in the cause of civil and religious liberty? What nation in the last agonies of its dissolution, had given greater proofs of what might be accomplished by a brave despair? If, in the course of many ages this despised and ill-treated people might have in some degree degenerated from the qualities of their forefathers—if by having been subjected to humiliation and slavery, they might have contracted some of the vices peculiar to outcasts and slaves, instead of being a subject of reproach to them, was it not rather a subject of shame and remorse to us? Let the House do justice to the Jews. Let them repeal the disabilities under which they laboured —the last relics of intolerance in this country. Let them open to the Jews the doors of that House—let them open to the Jews every career of honourable competition. Until they did that, let no man presume to say, that there was no genius in the countrymen of Isaiah, and no valour in the discendants of the Maccabees. In supporting the proposition of his right hon. and learned friend, he considered himself supporting the true interests of Christianity. He should think that he was offering a gross insult to his religion, if he were to say, that such an aid as intolerance was necessary for its support. Without such aid it had been established, and without such aid he was confident it might be maintained. It had tamed barbarous, and overpowered refined nations. It had triumphed over the graceful mythology of the Greeks, and the rude and bloody rites of Saxon superstition had vanished before it. It had foiled the policy of the Cæsars, it had subdued the barbarous nations of the North. But all these victories had been achieved, not by intolerance, but in spite of intolerant laws; and we learnt from all history that Christianity had every thing to fear from persecution as an ally, and nothing to dread from persecution as a foe. "May the Christian religion (said Mr. Macaulay, in conclusion) continue for ages to bless this country with its genial influence; strong in its lofty philosophy—strong in its spotless morality—strong in that powerful evidence, to which the most comprehensive minds have surrendered their belief; the last consolation of those who have outlived every earthly hope—the last restraint of those who are above all earthly fear. But, Sir, let us not mistake the character of that divine religion—let us not attempt to fight the battle of truth with the weapons of error, nor endeavour to support by oppression a religion whose noblest distinction is, that it first taught the human race the lesson of universal charity."

Mr. *Halcomb* felt, that he rose under the greatest disadvantage, after the eloquent address which the House had just heard—an address, however, which abounded with sophistry, even more than with eloquence. The hon. Member challenged any one to show why an arbitrary line should be drawn, and why on one side justice and on the other persecution should be supposed to exist. He (Mr. Halcomb) accepted the challenge. The broad line between that which ought to be considered persecution, and that which ought not to be considered persecution of the professors of Judaism, was bottomed on the principles of common sense and sound justice. The question was, whether there did not exist in the Constitution good reason for preventing the followers of Judaism from a full participation in that Constitution. Now the Constitution declared, that there should be in England an Established Church connected with and supported by the State. Even that principle had, indeed, of late been assailed, and therefore it was high time that the Members of that House should deliberate on the subject and make up their minds whether they would stand by the institutions of their fathers or not. As long, however, as there was that connection, it was their duty rigidly to uphold it, and notwithstanding all the taunts of the hon. Gentleman on those who held opinions different to his own; notwithstanding what he had been pleased to say about the logic of bigotry and intolerance, such was still the Constitution of this country. The union of Church and

State did not tend to make the Church political, but to the desirable end of making the State religious. The hon. Member was not entitled to call that persecution which merely prevented men from obtaining advantages the conditions of obtaining which they were not willing to fulfil. A country was entitled to confer political power only on those whom it chose to select for that purpose. Suppose the hon. Member himself, a Protestant, had a wife and children whose property he wished to protect by the appointment of two trustees; and suppose that there were six persons out of whom he might select those trustees—two Protestants, two Catholics, and two Jews. The hon. Member would no doubt choose the two Protestants; but could that justly be called a persecution of the other four? The same argument was applicable to States. There was no abstract right in men to political power; for political power, for the conduct of affairs could not be vested in the whole of the people; and must, therefore, be intrusted to a select portion of them. Those selected must be qualified in the manner which the Constitution of England had long required. Among those qualifications, was the test of a religious creed; a most wise security, applying, as it did, not to temporalities, but to matters of a spiritual nature. He admitted the Jews were a body against whose moral character nothing could be adduced; that they were good and loyal citizens of the King; but in this most Christian country—Christian at least beyond those walls for whatever might be thought within them, he was convinced that in the community at large, there was a thorough and a general conviction, that the Church and State must stand and fall together, in this yet Christian country,—it was not right that full political privileges should be conceded to the Jews. He gave credit to Ministers for good intentions—for a desire to rule the people under Christian principles; but if they did not avoid the errors they were falling into in matters of religion, and cease to lend a helping hand to the downfall of the Church, they would ere long, and the country would ere long, bitterly rue the improvident spirit which directed their measures.

Mr. *Poulter* said, that his hon. friend, the member for the University of Oxford, dwelt much, in the course of his address, upon the principle that Christianity was part and parcel of the law of the land. That principle was only laid down in judicial *dicta*, he believed, as applied to cases of libel, to which it would as completely apply, after the admission of the Jews into this House, as at present. His hon. friend, in answer to what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman who introduced the Motion, stated that the allusions to the cases of Joseph and Daniel were not in point, because their promotion was connected with miraculous agency; but that promotion would not have occurred, if the acceptance of service in the courts of foreign princes had been inconsistent with the duties of Israelites. The right hon. Mover alluded to an impression which prevailed in the world, that because the peculiar history and separation of the Jews were justly considered as a dispensation of Providence, it was the duty of mankind to assist such a dispensation. That was a difficult subject to discuss; but they ought to reflect, that although it might please God to turn and apply, in his own mysterious and inscrutable wisdom, the voluntary wickedness and crimes of man to his own purposes; yet such wickedness was not less abominable in his sight. The Jewish nation had already been exposed to the persecutions of the Inquisition, and to the sword of tyrannical and cruel princes. Those crimes had certainly operated to bring about the dispensations of God, but their authors on that account were not the less amenable to his justice. The Almighty had never commanded men to do or omit anything as the means of promoting his hidden counsels; but he had commanded them to exercise universal charity, and upon that command they ought to act, and not presume to do what was uncharitable on the plea of forwarding the secret schemes of Providence. If it were proposed as a problem how to prevent the conversion of the Jews, he should say, reject them from the bosom of civil society, and the enjoyment of civil rights. He could conceive that their admission to the enjoyment of the blessings and benefits of citizens might ultimately lead to their conversion, but could not conceive that persecution should unite them with the rest of mankind. Had not the world learnt, by past experience, that the system of exclusion excited pride, the most stubborn passion of the human mind, which bound the members of every sect together by the most indissoluble bond, and indisposed them even to an examination of any creed inconsistent with their own, far more than the operation of any religious sentiment? The Jews were accused of a want of patriotism, which had been caused by the disabilities to which they had been subjected. It was no peculiarity in them. The history of England proved that all persecuted sects had sought another country. The Protestants of France appealed to the aid of England, as the Catholics did to that of Spain. The spirit of persecution had, indeed, ceased, but the spirit of exclusion produced effects which though very different in degree, partook of the same character. Reason and history sufficiently proved that patriotism was the result of a wise and liberal policy. As regarded the admission of a sect to the enjoyment of the rights and privileges of a state, the most important inquiry that could be made, was into their general, moral, and social character. But this peculiar people were distinguished by their veneration for the domestic and social relations of life. Instances of the violation of the duties of husband and wife—of parent and child—were rare amongst them. Their charitable institutions, their schools of education were very numerous. From drunkenness which, beyond any other vice called for the most anxious and urgent correction of the Legislature, and which was more and more infecting and demoralizing the whole of the lower classes, and had become a great national calamity, they were happily, and beyond others, exempted. No practice was more commonly resorted to as a mode of procuring a momentary alleviation to a degraded and wounded spirit. They had nobly resisted the temptation. That they were habituated to pecuniary avocations, and to the lower descriptions of trade—was not their fault. It would be an additional injury to impute to them that which was the result of the system of exclusion, of which they were the victims. Had they not always been a retiring and a peaceful people? Had they ever been known to be guilty of political crimes, or by word or deed to have aided in any attack either upon the Church or State? Had they shown any backwardness in contributing their share to the taxation of the country? They were capable of being electors—why were they to be the only constituents contumeliously excluded by law from becoming Representatives? They were now admitted to the Bar. Having gone so far in a just and enlightened spirit of concession, why stop short of the full boon of complete emancipation? The hon. member for Oldham had asked whether they were prepared to unchristianize the country—and permit a Jew Judge to try a libel upon the Christian religion? He should like to ask the hon. member for Oldham how long this new passion had glowed in his bosom? A malicious writing published with intent to vilify and bring into disgrace and contempt the Christian religion would be a libel, and an upright Judge of any religious persuasion whatever, might properly try a man for such an offence as that. If all experience showed, that civil distinctions promoted instead of removing religious difference—that tyranny never did, and never could, correct religious errors, but was odious to God as well as man—it might please the great disposer of all things to bring about the consummation of the extraordinary history of the Jewish people by love and charity. He believed without any ill-judged allusions to Scripture, that all true policy was to be found not in the books of men, but in the Word of God. To love one another was one of his chief commandments, and in obedience to that he would remove the disabilities of the Jews.

Mr. *Hume* could not find, in the speeches of the hon. member for the University of Oxford, and of the hon. member for Dover, any arguments to answer the admirable speech of the hon. member for Leeds; and the proposition that these unjust and injudicious disabilities ought to be removed, was untouched. The lamentations which had been so pathetically uttered by the hon. member for Dover (Mr. Halcomb), seemed as if intended to apply to former Parliaments for repealing the Test and Corporation Acts, and emancipating the Catholics. He considered the Jews of the present day were by no means like those of former ages, and that it was a great mistake to go back at all to those times in legislating upon the present question. The arguments of the hon. member for Oxford on the subjects of the Jews' oath had no weight in his mind —they swore by Jehovah, on the Old Testament, and we, by God, on the Gospels, which was the only difference. It had been said, if this sect were once allowed full political privileges, by what right and on what reason could we refuse them to the Brahmins and Parsees? Nothing would give him greater pleasure than seeing Brahmins and Parsees in that House. He would tell hon. Members from his own experience, that they were as intelligent and valuable a class as any in their own country. He should give the Resolution his most hearty support. He held a letter in his hand, though he would not trouble the House by reading it, from Mr. Quincy Adams, the late President of the United States, stating there were no better citizens than the Jews, and expressing a hope that ere long the whole of Europe would see the justice and the wisdom of freely conceding to them the fullest political privileges.

Sir *Robert Inglis* might perhaps save the time of the House by observing, that in the absence of many of those who were opposed to the measure he should not divide on that occasion, and he felt the less inclination to do so on account of the absence of his Majesty's Ministers.

Mr. *O'Connell* must say one word on an occasion in which his feelings were so warmly interested. He had struggled for religious liberty, not for sectarian advantages, but for the principle that man's conscience should be free. An individual, as he knew, might be equally punished by unjust restrictions and by unmerited stripes. He was delighted that the day of good feeling in these matters had come—that this respectable and ancient nation, which had faithfully preserved a high religious sentiment, was no longer to be estranged from us, and that they could at last see the period when something like justice was granted to all men—when conscience was free, and the country rid of a stain which had so long dishonoured her.

Mr. *William Roche:* Belonging Sir, like my hon. and learned friend, the member for Dublin to a religious persuasion which had been so long so unjustly and injuriously persecuted and degraded as the Roman Catholics were—injuriously—not alone as regards their own feelings and interests, but the interests of the community at large; for it is impossible that 6,000,000 or 7,000,000 of the people can be oppressed and their energies paralyzed without inflicting deep injury on the whole community. I feel myself bound alike by a conviction of its intrinsic justice and utility, as by a disposition to mete out an equal measure of liberality to all sects, to support the Resolution before the House. Sir, we all recollect that the same stale arguments which used to be directed in days not long gone by against granting further political privileges to the Catholics are, amongst others, revived on the present occasion, and will ever be revived so long as any vestige of exclusion is allowed to remain. If, Sir, the Jews have proved themselves good subjects in this country, and in all other countries where they have been domesticated and admitted to political freedom, that is all we have a right to look to, leaving to them as to every other sect, perfect liberty of conscience in their spiritual concerns. Moreover, Sir, I have such high opinions of the superiority of the Christian Religion, that I am convinced that the more intimately we associate with the Jews, the more they will discover and appreciate that superiority and abate their prejudices; and the more of justice and equality we dispense to them, the more they will see that we practise and carry into effect that admirable and characteristic maxim of Christianity of doing by others as we would wish them to do by us. Sir, whatever destiny the Almighty may have in view for the Jewish people, he can carry into effect without our vain co-operations, and we should therefore, leave that matter to His all sufficient Providence. Sir, it is not by calling in the aid of political exclusion or civil disabilities that we shall advance the progress or raise the character of the Christian Religion; but by acting in consistency with its charitable and benignant precepts, thereby exhibiting it in its naturally attractive light and heavenly origin. Sir, have any of those evil forebodings of which we have heard on every relaxation of restraining laws, been realized? On the contrary, is not the whole of society becoming every day more harmonised and more happy by the relaxation? Sir, instead of proceeding in the wake of other nations in this course of social improvement we ought to have led the way, but it is better late than never. With regard to the interests of the Constitution, I entertain the same views on this subject as I do in regard to our religion—namely, that the more just and comprehensive we make it, the more we engage the feelings of all to admire and support it. Finding the House, Sir, so desirous of closing the debate, I shall not longer occupy its time, especially as the feeling in favour of the proposition is so predominant.

Resolution read, and the Question put,

The "Ayes" resounded through the House; the "Noes" were few.

Resolution agreed to—Report ordered to be presented to the House—House resumed.

PROCLAIMING OF KILKENNY.] Mr. *O'Connell* said, he wished to call the attention of the House to certain occurrences which had taken place in Ireland since the passing of the Coercion Bill, which at once put an end to everything in the shape of constitutional right. It had been frequently asserted, during the progress of that Bill through the House, that it was more than probable it would never be put in force at all; yet not twenty-four hours were suffered to elapse after its arrival in Dublin before an entire county was proclaimed under it, and that in the most tyrannical and offensive manner. Ireland for 700 years had bitterly felt the oppression and the galling tyranny of this country, yet she never at any period felt such an indignant sense of injustice as now. He never yet could learn what good this country had done for Ireland—what kindness she had shown towards her. He had often asked the question, but had never been honoured with an answer. Knowing this, he felt it his duty anxiously to watch the operations of this Act, that every injustice committed under it might be at once and thoroughly exposed. Why, then, was the whole county of Kilkenny proclaimed, when they had it only a few days since, on the authority of the noble Lord opposite, that a part of it only was disturbed? Why, then, resort to the severe measure of proclaiming beyond the parts disturbed? But that was not the subject of his present complaint. Not content with putting the county beyond the pale of the Constitution, the Irish Government must proceed the length of proclaiming the county of the city. The city, it should be known, contained 25,000 inhabitants, and had straggling suburbs branching into the county. In those suburbs there had, he too well knew, been three or four Whitefeet offences; but they furnished no valid ground for proclaiming the city. The night before this harsh and uncalled-for measure, there was what he might term a little melancholy merriment amongst the people. Music was provided, and when night was fast closing in, many of those melancholy airs were played which were for ever wedded to the Irish mind by the series of calamities inflicted on her by this country. The second night came on, but they were interfered with by the Lord Lieutenant issuing his Proclamation, which, to call despotic, was to treat it lightly, for it was in fact, most brutal [some conversation here taking place the hon. Member continued]. The House was careless—why should it not be? It was only an act of despotism he was complaining of—it was only an added insult—a new wrong upon his unfortunate country. He was obliged to raise his voice to its highest pitch, for the poor chance of getting some one on the other side of the Table to hear him. The Proclamation of which he complained was signed, to his astonishment, by some of the Judges of the land and the Commander of the Forces. The Irish Government, too, used their influence with the newspapers in urging the necessity for such a proceeding, and paid for paragraphs inserted in the *Dublin Times* and *Dublin Evening Post,* for the purpose of having them copied into the London Journals. These papers he might properly designate as the *Moniteurs* of the Pacha of Ireland. Now, putting these paragraphs out of view, he should like to know on what grounds the Irish Government had included the whole of the county within the operation of the Bill? The only reason he believed, why the city of Kilkenny had been proclaimed was, that it contained hotels for the accommodation of the officers, who were bound, under the Coercive Act, to hold the Courts-martial within a proclaimed district. If the despatches for which he was about to move were granted, he believed that what he now asserted would be found to have been officially stated—namely, that it would be more convenient to the members of the Court-martial to assemble in the city than in the county of Kilkenny. The hotels in that city were excellent, and to enable the officers to have the advantage of living in them, the city of Kilkenny had been put under the severe operation. He believed he should be able to show that this was the reason if he was allowed to have what he now applied for, a copy of the Despatch from the Lord Lieutenant or the Secretary of Ireland, stating the reason why that city had been proclaimed. If the despatch was produced, the reason he had stated would be found to be avowed. But it would not be produced—it would be suppressed; and he knew that it was of little use for him to appeal to that House, who were not inclined to listen to appeals on behalf of Ireland. He spoke without disguise on that subject at least. He therefore desired, in the first place, to have laid before the House, "Copies of all Proclamations and Orders issued by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, under the statute of 3 William 4th, c. 4." In the next place he wished to have "A return of the number of persons committed to gaol of the county of Kilkenny for the last twelve months, specifying the crimes and offences for which each person was committed, the time when, and the place where, each such offence was perpetrated, how many were indicted and tried, and the result of each trial." So far he did not anticipate any opposition from the right hon. Gentleman opposite; but, as the other information for which it was his intention to ask was of a more important nature, he imagined it would be opposed. He wished to have "A copy of a despatch or letter from the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, or the Secretary, stating the reason for proclaiming the county of the city of Kilkenny to be in a state of insubordination or disturbance, pursuant to the Act of 3 William 4th, c. 4." The document would, he presumed, be suppressed, and the House which passed the Disturbances Act would be very ready, he had no doubt, to accede to the propriety of that suppression. After the measures which had been adopted, he did not expect much sympathy for Ireland in that House; but if any sympathy did exist, could there be any reason for withholding this document? If they passed an unconstitutional and arbitrary Bill—if they placed a despotic power in the hand of a military man, certainly not a very wise man, that his intentions might be most honourable, no one would question, but the amount of whose intellect it was perfectly safe to dispute; if they had placed a despotic power in the hand of such a man, did it not behove them to see that he did not abuse it? He wished to know, then, what were the reasons for subjecting the county of the city of Kilkenny to the operation of this despotic law, and upon that ground he asked for the papers which he had described.

Sir *John Hobhouse*[*] hoped that in the few observations which it would be his duty to make, in answer to the hon. and learned Gentleman, it would not be expected that he should deem it necessary to go into any justification of that which the Parliament had so recently thought fit to enact. He must, however, on this first occasion of his addressing the House in the situation which he now occupied, protest against the assertion made by the hon. and learned member for Dublin, that the British Parliament was not inclined to do justice to Ireland, or to listen to appeals in her favour, or to hear in good faith everything that was advanced in her behalf by those whom she sent hither as her Representatives. If the hon. Member really meant this, let him bring the question fairly before the House, and he would find that it could be met most triumphantly. The question which the hon. and learned Gentleman asked, was, why the city of Kilkenny had been proclaimed. The answer was to be found in the state of the county of Kilkenny for the last year. In that time more offences had been committed in that county than in the whole province of Ulster taken together. From the 1st to the 14th of March alone, there were 114 offences, against which it was the intention of the late Act to provide, committed in that county. It was manifest, therefore, that it was necessary to proclaim the county of Kilkenny; and when they proclaimed the county, were they to leave out of the operation of the Act the city, which was the most important part of it? He had a communication from the county to show, that it was from the understanding that this Act would be at once put in operation, that the Magistracy did not assemble and address the Lord-lieutenant to put the Act in operation there. Knowing that Kilkenny would be made the subject of discussion, he had thought it his duty on the day he came into office to write to Ireland, expressing his wish that the city of Kilkenny should not, if possible, be included in the operation of the Act. The answer he received was, that the first wish was not to include the city, but that it was found in the suburbs and in the city itself, there were numbers of the very persons who were not only suspected but known to be considerably implicated in these very Whitefeet outrages which the hon. and learned Gentleman had been among the first to disclaim, and to put down which he had again and again declared that he would lend a vigour beyond the law—namely, his own to put it down. To leave the city unproclaimed, would be to allow it to be a refuge to those who were guilty of these outrages. That was the substance of the answer which he received in reply to his letter. He would not state from whom he received it, because the hon. and learned Gentleman would only tell him that his correspondent was one of those persons who were implicated in what he was pleased to call a wicked conspiracy against the liberties of Ireland. He trusted, however, that the learned Gentleman would live to see that the strong measures adopted towards Ireland were not for the purpose of crush-ing liberty there, but for the purpose of restoring and securing that which was real liberty—freedom of action to every honest and well-disposed man, without the dread of violence from the lawless and turbulent. The learned Gentleman protested against 25,000 peaceable and well-disposed persons, resident in the city of Kilkenny, being subjected to a punishment which ought to be borne only by those who were actually guilty, but it was his duty to inform the learned Gentleman, and the House, that every care had been taken not to have any of the more severe restrictions of the Act put into operation in the city. That, in a general view, might be no palliation; but the inhabitants of the city of Kilkenny regarded it as a very material palliation; and so far from being thought an evil, I know, from the best possible authority, that they look upon the operation of the Act as an advantage, the more especially as the more penal enactments were not to be put in force. The inhabitants of Kilkenny were satisfied that this Proclamation had been the means of their protection. There would be no objection to give the copy of the Proclamation, for it had been placarded; nor any to give the amount of committals, though it would not show the real state of crime, for out of ten offences there were not more than one or two committals. The other return for which the learned Gentleman asked was, and the demand he must be permitted to say, was perfectly unreasonable, A "Copy of a despatch or letter from the Lord-lieutenant of Ireland, or the Secretary, stating the reasons for proclaiming the county of the city of Kilkenny to be in a state of insubordination, or disturbance, pursuant to the Act of 3rd Will. 4th c. 4." The hon. and learned Gentleman said, that that despatch or letter would show, that the real and only reason for proclaiming the city was to afford the military officers, who would compose the Court-martial, the accommodation of good hotels and a comfortable court-house to sit in, instead of being obliged to conduct their proceedings, and to put up with the inconvenient lodgings of the neighbouring villages. The reasons for proclaiming the city were those which he had already stated, and he begged to assure the learned Gentleman that nothing relative to the accommodation of the officers, was to be found in any of the communications of the Government upon the subject of that proclamation. He trusted, therefore, that the hon. and learned Gentleman would not press the House to a division upon the production of the Government despatches. He had heard the hon. and learned Gentleman ten thousand times express the utmost anxiety for the suppression of the Whitefoot outrages; and how, in the name of wonder, could he wish in the very outset—in the very first instance of its application—to attempt to paralyze a law which, so far as the mere putting down of these outrages went, the hon. Member must, if his previous assertions were true, be anxious to support in every possible way. If he were really desirous of putting down Whiteboyism in Kilkenny, upon what principle was it that he wished for the exclusion of a particular spot from the operation of the Act? It did so happen, that in the city of Kilkenny, one of the learned Gentleman's active ambassadors, was some time since very busily employed in organizing one of those bodies which were taught to co-operate with the learned Gentleman, and who in that case assembled in a particular part of the city, and gave themselves the name of the "Black Alley Meeting." One of the effects of the proclamation would be to break up that meeting; and perhaps it was for that reason that the learned Gentleman objected to the city being included. It was not, he could assure the House, without some strong conviction of the absolute necessity of such a step that it had been adopted by the Government.

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[*] The right hon. Baronet had recently been appointed Secretary for Ireland, in consequence of Mr. Stanley having been appointed Secretary of State for the Colonies. The vacancy in the Colonial Office was caused by Viscount Goderich accepting the office of Lord Privy Seal, on the resignation of the Earl of Durham.

Mr. *Sullivan* said, that if there was any ground for inflicting this act on the city of Kilkenny, it ought to be stated openly and fairly. He was sure that there were none of the authorities of the city who would justify the measure. The last Assizes there showed it to be unnecessary. It had been most injurious to the city. He had a letter, which stated that on the market-day next after the Proclamation, the usual supply of provisions did not come in—there was not one-tenth of the potatoes that were required brought into the city. He admitted that the Act was administered with the utmost lenity; but he denied that it ought to have been inflicted at all on the city. He admitted that there was a necessity for some strong measure to preserve the peace of the county, but that necessity did not extend to the city. If there had been any such, the right hon. Gentleman would not have withheld it.

The *Solicitor General* said, he agreed with those who thought that it was impossible for that House to show too much vigilance in watching the exercise of the powers lately conferred on the Government by the Act under consideration. Those powers were unconstitutional, and required to be watched; but in this instance there was not the slightest reason for imputing to the Lord-lieutenant that he had unnecessarily put them into operation. The hon. and learned Gentleman had complained that the Proclamation was signed by such of the Judges as were Privy Councillors. That complaint came with a very ill grace from the hon. and learned Gentleman, who, among the Amendments he had proposed, had brought forward one, the object of which was, that no Proclamation should be issued that was not so signed, and he especially recommended that the Judges of the Court of King's Bench should sign it —persons who, in his (the Solicitor General's) opinion, were the least fit to be selected from the other Judges of the land, inasmuch as, by their very office, they must necessarily be the persons before whom the offenders would come. The Magistrates of Kilkenny had presented a Petition to that House, praying for them to pass the Bill, in order that it might be put in operation in the county. Now, but for the accidental circumstance of the city being a county of itself, it would necessarily have been included within the terms of the Proclamation regarding the county of Kilkenny. Why was that mere accident to make a difference in the conduct of the Government, and to make them neglect the means of preserving the peace of the city? It had been stated that incursions had been made into the city and was it not, therefore, plain that if the city were exempted, it would become the refuge of all the lawless. It was only by vigorously enforcing the Act wherever it was necessary, that any success could attend it. To him, therefore, it seemed that the complaint and the Motion of the hon. and learned member for Dublin were destitute of foundation.

Mr. *Hume* said, the Solicitor General had made out no case whatever in defence of the Irish Government's having put the city of Kilkenny under the operation of the Coercive Bill; indeed he looked upon all the hon. and learned Member had said to be but a lame excuse for a very indefensible proceeding. The right hon. Secretary for Ireland declared the Lord-lieutenant's reason to be founded on the fact that certain meetings, tending to a violation of the public tranquillity, had been held in Kilkenny city; but if so, why punish the whole city for the act of a few? Why not prohibit the meetings by Proclamation, as had been done in Dublin? He was of opinion that the Act had been very improperly enforced in the case of Kilkenny city.

The *Attorney General* said, that the only question for the House to consider was whether the Irish Government had not acted in strict conformity to the law in all that had hitherto been done with respect to the enforcement of the Irish Disturbance Bill in the county and city of Kilkenny; and if such was the case, what ground was there for the complaint of the hon. and learned member for Dublin, or what reason had he urged to induce the House to accede to his Motion? None, that he knew of; for the Irish Disturbance Bill was either intended to be enforced, or else it was a dead letter—and being enforced strictly within the limitations prescribed by the measure itself, there was no cause for complaint, unless any case beyond the law could be brought forward, which had not been done. Under these circumstances he must decline to sanction the Motion of the hon. and learned member for Dublin.

Mr. *O'Dwyer* contended, that the city of Kilkenny was perfectly quiet. This was admitted on all hands, and, therefore, that city ought to have been excepted from the operation of the Proclamation. It was quite clear that Government had exceeded the necessity of the case, and they ought to be compelled to lay upon the Table of the House something like a justification of their measures.

Mr. *Spring Rice* said, that the distinction which the hon. and learned member for Dublin had drawn between the case of Kilkenny county and Kilkenny city would not have been thought of but from the mere accident that Kilkenny city was a city and a county of itself, and was therefore of necessity distinctly and separately named in the act of proclamation, by which the district was placed under the operation of the Disturbance Bill. If it was admitted, that the county of Kilkenny was justly placed under the Disturbance Bill, why should the Government be called upon to admit so trifling a distinction as that of a mere local difference, in order to exempt Kilkenny city from the Bill? Were such a distinction allowed practically to exist, it would lead to the most serious inconveniences. What must be the consequence if the mere passing a line was to give security to the offenders? He recollected the case of the city of Limerick, which, when the Insurrection Act was enforced in the county of Limerick, was exempt from its operation solely because it was a city and a county of itself. The consequence was, that a man could commit an offence on one side of the street which would render him liable to the Insurrection Act, which he escaped by crossing over to the other side of the same street. He must say, that if the city of Kilkenny were to be specially exempted from the operation of the Act, the consequence would be, that it would become the focus of insurrection and sedition, and the exemption would only tend to establish a sanctuary where sedition could be planned, and where plots could be hatched, without rendering the guilty amenable to the laws which were framed for the express purpose of putting down these acts. If, therefore it was right to enforce the Bill in the county, it must of necessity follow, and a lamentable necessity he admitted it was, that the city of Kilkenny must also be included in its operation. Before he sat down, he must observe that no objection existed on the part of Government to grant the two first returns asked for by the hon. Member—namely, the copies of the proclamations under the Act hitherto issued, and the returns of the number of committals and species of crimes, during the last twelve months, to Kilkenny city and county gaols. The other part of the Motion he decidedly objected to, and would oppose.

Mr. *Harvey* said, that not one argument had been advanced by the right hon. the Secretary for the Treasury in defence of the proclamation of the city of Kilkenny but what would be equally applicable to the whole of Ireland, if any hon. Member chose to get up on that side of the House and urge the proclamation of the whole kingdom. The speech of the right hon. Secretary for Ireland was an experimental speech; and he had no doubt, if the experiment he now recommended were found ineffectual, and that crime fled from the city and county of Kilkenny to the country in the neighbourhood, the right hon. Gentleman would feel himself authorised, in the same spirit, and by this ingenious invention of his of asylums (a word not to be found, by the bye, in the whole melancholy Act, as it was called), to recommend placing each district, which proved the asylum of those who had once been disaffected, out of the pale of the Constitution, till he had tried the experiment on the whole of Ireland. This Bill was granted to the present Ministry upon their own responsibility. That responsibility was now challenged, and the Government were bound to produce the documents now required to the House; for it was distinctly upon the faith of an assurance they would do so, when called upon, that the measure had wrung a reluctant assent from the House.

Mr. *William Roche* said: Sir, my right hon. friend the Secretary to the Treasury, having adverted to the disadvantage he conceives to have arisen from the city and county of the city of Limerick being exempted from the operations of the Insurrection Act, while the adjoining counties were, in consequence of their then state of disturbance, placed under its restraints, calls upon me as one of the Representatives and one of the Magistrates of that city to set my right hon. friend right, and to assure him that no such disadvantage had been experienced; at all events no disadvantage adequate to the necessity, or commensurate with the hardships, of placing the inhabitants of a perfectly loyal and peaceable city out of the pale of the ordinary law for the protection of their liberties. No doubt, Sir, it demanded some increased vigilance and vigour on the part of the municipal authorities, but that vigilance and vigour were found quite sufficient to prevent contamination and spare the commission of the great injustice (from an overweening precaution) of exposing the innocent and guilty to a similar state of coercion. I apprehend, therefore, Sir, that the case of Limerick is no illustration of the necessity or propriety of placing the city of Kilkenny, tranquil as it is admitted to be, under the still more severe enactments of the new law—Sir with regard to the question in general I think the city of Kilkenny stands peculiarly entitled to exemption and respect, for the more contiguous it is to the moral contagion raging in its vicinity the more merit it deserves for keeping itself free from the malady. In another point of view also, Sir, I think it would have been judicious as well as just to make the distinction, because it would show the disturbers of the peace in the county, in the most forcible colours, the evil consequences of their misdeeds, by the contrast of freedom and comfort enjoyed by their neighbours in the city compared with the restrictions and restraints to which they were subjected; I therefore, Sir, see no case made out to justify this mixing up promiscuously of guilt and innocence; for may not the disturbers in the county say to their tranquil brethren in the city: "Well, what advantage have you gained by your conduct—are you not as much coerced and annoyed as we are?" With regard, Sir, to the production of the papers called for, I think Ministers ought not to have waited till they were applied for, but should have voluntarily produced them in order to show their anxiety to justify themselves with the House and the country in this first exercise of the great and extraordinary powers committed to them by this law. I shall, therefore, Sir, vote for the production of the documents called for by my hon. and learned friend, the member for Dublin.

Mr. *Aglionby* expressed his surprise that the Motion of the hon. and learned member for Dublin should have met with the reception it had at the hands of the House; and that his Majesty's Ministers should not have instantly conceded, as a matter of right, demands so reasonable as those of the hon. and learned Gentleman. It was the duty of Government to prove—the *onus probandi* entirely rested with them—that the city of Kilkenny was in such a state of disturbance as to require the enforcement of the Act which had been lately passed. The question, at present, was not whether the Government were right or wrong in their proceedings, but whether the House had a right to call for the documents to which the Motion before the House related.

Sir *Samuel Whalley* said, that his Majesty's Ministers were not called upon to defend their conduct, but to give to the House information on the necessity of proclaiming the city of Kilkenny. He, therefore, conjured Ministers, unless there were very great obstacles to so doing, to produce the documents asked for by the hon. and learned member for Dublin.

Lord *Sandon* said, that he was not surprised at the stern opposition which those Gentlemen who originally opposed the Disturbances in Ireland Bill now opposed the proclamation, and the conduct of the Irish Government in respect to this district, but he, having consented to a departure from the Constitution, was willing to see the law put into full execution. Was that measure, he would ask, to which he, as well as many others, had very reluctantly given assent, to remain as a mere *brutum fulmen* on the Statute-book? He thought that the *onus probandi* did not rest with Ministers; but it rested with the opposite party to prove that there was no necessity for the enforcement of the present measure. He should support the Irish Government in the course it had adopted with respect to the district of the county of Kilkenny, of which they had but too often heard the most alarming accounts, until he was convinced they were culpable in the conduct they had pursued. It would be utterly ridiculous to call on the Ministers day by day for the reasons of their conduct whenever they carried that Act into execution; some confidence must be placed in them; and if they wished for the restoration of tranquillity, it was incumbent on them to allow the Government to proceed with its work.

Mr. *O'Connell* called to the recollection of hon. Members, that on a former occasion he moved, that in a fortnight after the proclaiming of any district by the Lord-lieutenant—provided that that House was then sitting—evidence should be adduced, and reasons given, why that district had been proclaimed. He acknowledged that his Motion was lost by a large majority. But the Ministers then promised that, upon all occasions, they would instantly produce evidence, and give reasons for the proclaiming of any district. Had they kept their word? Their present conduct was the answer. As for the argument that Kilkenny would be an asylum, or that any other district would be an asylum for the lawless, nothing could be more shallow—more unstatesmanlike. By none of the clauses of the Act was it provided that a place should be proclaimed because it was an asylum. It was enacted that a district should be proclaimed when it was found to be in a state of disturbance. But was the city of Kilkenny disturbed? It was not. The Proclamation then was a lie! That Proclamation, signed by the Lord Lieutenant, the Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, and by the Irish Ex-attorney General, was a lie! That it was a lie had been that evening admitted by the right hon. Secretary for Ireland, and by his Majesty's Attorney and Solicitor General; and yet the Lord-lieutenant was allowed to proclaim a tranquil city—to deprive its peaceable inhabitants of the Trial by Jury—to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act—and to force them to remain within doors between the hours of sun-set and sun-rise. Hon. Members on the other side of the House had unceasingly cried out about confidence in Ministers—that Ministers would well repay that confidence. This was the confidence which the Irish people were taught to look for from the Reformed House of Parliament. They talked about suppressing Whitefeet, yet their Bill was the best possible means of making Whitefeet. For instance, would the people of Kilkenny be more satisfied for their oppression? Since the Ministers had only got this Bill on the agreement that they would never do wrong without just cause, he now demanded, since they had done wrong, that they would show some reason for it. If Ministers refused this, the country, at least, would agree with him in saying that they refused because that they had no reason to give.

The House divided—Ayes 28; Noes 115: Majority 87.

List of the Ayes.

ENGLAND.
Aglionby, H. A.
Attwood, T.
Blackstone, W. S.
Blamire, Wm.
Ewart, W.
Harvey, D. W.
Jervis, J.
Parrott, J.
Phillips, M.
Roebuck, J.
Romilly, J.
Thicknesse, R.
Tullamore, L.
Warburton, H.
Wason, Rigby
Whalley, Sir S.

IRELAND.
Fitzsimon, N.
Lynch, A. H.
Maclaughlin, L.
O'Connell, Maurice
O'Connell, C.
O'Connell, J.
O'Connell, Morgan
O'Dwyer, A. C.
Roche, W.
Ruthven, E. S.
Ruthven, E.
Sullivan, R.

TELLERS.
J. Hume
Daniel O'Connell

Game Laws.] Mr. *Lennard* moved the second reading of the Bill to amend the Game Act. As there were many Gentlemen who seemed to misunderstand the object he had in view, he was anxious to state, that all he proposed to effect by this Bill was, to make the Game Act what it was when introduced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and before it was sent to the other House. He hoped the House would agree with him that a clause more unjust or oppressive than the one he proposed to repeal was never introduced into any measure. It interfered with existing rights and interests. Formerly, if tenants were, in other respects, qualified, they were entitled to shoot over their own grounds. This right had been taken from the tenant and given to the landlord, against the very principle of the Bill as it was introduced by the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The clause which he wished to repeal was introduced into the Bill in the other House; and the supporters of the Bill were willing to admit this clause rather than that the measure should be defeated for the Session. He had been told that there were very few persons who could be affected by this clause; but, on the contrary, he had good reason to believe that the number was very considerable. But whether the injustice affected a greater or smaller number of persons, this House—he hoped—would not allow it to continue. It was unnecessary for him to dwell on the extent of the evil; for if it existed, it was the duty of the Legislature to remedy it. The fact was, that it injured a very numerous class of persons. It was also in direct variance with the principle of the Act into which it was introduced. The object of that Act was to extend the right of shooting, and to allow those persons to shoot who were formerly excluded from the privilege; but this clause tended materially to diminish that right. Before he moved the second reading, he would answer one objection which he had heard urged against this proposition. It was said, that it would work in an injurious manner towards those landlords who had let farms since the passing of the Game Act; as they had neglected to insert, as they formerly did, a clause reserving to themselves the right of shooting. As the law stood, game was the property of the landlord, and it was the object of the present Bill to transfer that property to the tenant. Now, unless there was a clause in every lease reserving this, the landlord would be deprived of his right. If such leases had been granted, his Bill would deprive the landlord of a privilege which he intended to reserve to himself, unless the tenant should waive his right. If, however, the Bill were read a second time, he would agree to the insertion of a clause saving the right of the landlord in all these cases. His object was, that injury should not be done to either landlord or tenant. The present law was attended with the greatest injustice to a large body of the tenantry of this country; and he was sure that it was quite sufficient to show that, to induce the House to consent to its being amended.

Mr. *Fysche Palmer* had the strongest objections to this Bill. In the Act which was passed a year and a half ago, the game was specifically declared to be the property of the landlord; and the hon. Gentleman now called upon the House to declare that this should no longer be the case. He had supposed that the Game Laws had been set at rest by this Act, which came into operation in October 1831; and certainly nothing had occurred since that time to render an alteration of the law necessary, and to say that landlords should no longer be the proprietors of the game on their estates. This Bill would work a gross injustice to every landlord in the country. Many landlords had, since that period, let portions of their estates under the supposition that the present law would continue—and had not reserved the game. This clause would take away the right they now possessed, and deprive them of the property in the game, and of the right to kill it. The Bill, as it was, was founded in injustice, and he certainly should divide the House respecting it. It was impossible that the House could consent to let it proceed further, merely on an understanding that one ground of objection to it should be removed at a future stage. Time had not yet been allowed to give the Game Bill a fair trial, and therefore he should oppose any proposition for altering it at present.

The *Solicitor General* was desirous of saying a few words before this Bill was read a second time. When the former Game Bill was before the House, he had agreed to that Amendment of the Lords, which it was the object of the present Bill to alter, because he feared that that measure would be lost if the Amendment was not agreed to. His noble friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had said at the time, that he lamented the introduction of the clause; and observed that, though it was against existing rights and interests, he was induced to agree in these amendments, fearing that otherwise the Bill would be lost for, at least, a year. At that time he observed that he trusted that the wrong done would be remedied at some future period. But what had been the effect of this Amendment of the Lords? A Gentleman holding an estate of 500 acres as tenant, if otherwise qualified, had a right to shoot over it, and the landlord could not come upon it without his permission. The Amendment of the Lords deprived every tenant of this privilege; and, not only the landlord might come himself and shoot the game, which was fed off the produce of the tenant's farm, but he might send other persons to kill the game there, and then he was entitled to sell it. The tenant was altogether excluded from killing the game. This was an extreme injustice, and neither more nor less than a breach of all then existing contracts between landlord and tenant. According to his (the Solicitor General's) notion of right and wrong, it was the duty of the Legislature instantly to amend the law which wrought such an injustice. The objection of the hon. member for Reading was not, in any way applicable; for this Bill proposed, merely, to restore the state of things to what it was before the Game Bill passed.

Colonel *Wood* was sorry to hear the observations of the hon. and learned Solicitor General, and he trusted that the House would not be led away by his remarks. The hon. and learned Gentleman admitted that, formerly, the tenant, if not otherwise qualified, could not shoot on the farm he occupied. The hon. and learned Gentleman, to suit his present purpose, assumed the case where a tenant was qualified, and was in the possession of a right of shooting, of which he was deprived by the Game Bill. Did the hon. and learned Gentleman believe that there was a single occupier of a farm in England, who, being in that situation, had not reserved to himself the right of shooting over his farm by a clause in the lease? It was certainly possible that there might be isolated cases of this sort; but, certainly, the operation of the Lords Amendment on the Game Bill had not been so extensive in its operation as to make it incumbent on the House to alter one of the most important provisions in that Act. He had exerted himself, for several years, with a view to ameliorate the Game Laws, and to put them on a less objectionable footing than they then were; and he could not, therefore, be supposed to be a staunch supporter of the old and severe laws formerly in force with respect to game. The hon. and learned Gentleman had spoken of landlords depriving tenants of the right of shooting, by means of the operation of this Amendment; but he would venture to say, that there were but very few cases in which this had occurred. He was satisfied that in most of those cases in which the occupier was qualified, he specially covenanted for the right of shooting over the farm he occupied; or the landlord reserved to himself in the same way, by express provision, the right. In the Committee which sat up-stairs on the Game Laws seventeen years ago, a question had arisen in whom the property of game on a farm should be vested? The present Lord Teynham, the late Mr. Curwen, and other Gentlemen who were not very much disposed to set up arbitrary views of the Game Laws, in other respects, agreed cordially in the Resolutions that were come to by the Committee. In the first place, it was resolved that all game should be the property of the person on whose land it was found. The question then arose, whether this was the landlord or tenant; and the Committee determined that the property was in the landlord. True, the clause which it was now proposed to alter was not in the Bill when it passed through that House, but was introduced in the House of Lords; but then, it should be recollected, that this Bill passed in a very hasty manner through that House; and he himself had been very glad that the alteration was made in the Bill by the other House. Parliament was justified in taking credit to itself for having passed the measure in the form in which it now stood. He was aware some Gentlemen were of opinion, that all Game Laws were bad, and he would not then stop to argue with them. It should be recollected, however, that the Act which it was now proposed to alter, greatly ameliorated the former law. It allowed game to be sold—it extended the qualification in the most extensive manner, where, formerly, the qualification was most objectionable. The Lords had placed the matter on the right footing; and it was inexpedient and unjust to alter the principle of the Game Act. It had been said that tenants who had taken leases since the Game Act passed had waived their rights; but tenants could not waive a right which landlords never granted to them. An assumption of that sort seemed the oddest perversion of words imaginable. Until the landlord granted away his property by a lease, all the land, trees, and game, belonged to him; and nothing was more common than for the landlord to reserve particular rights to himself; for instance, in the case of trout-streams, to this day—and formerly, the right of shooting. It might be said that the tenants would not take farms if the landlords reserved to themselves these rights. He could only say, that he never knew an instance in which there was such a refusal. The landlord had ever claimed, and ever exercised the right, of granting the game to the tenant, or any other person. He hoped that this Bill would be rejected, and that the country would be allowed to see how the present system worked—which he had no doubt would be better and better every year. He regretted that it had not put an end to poaching; but he was sure that, taking it altogether, it had done great good.

Mr. *Horatio Ross* said, as the hon. member for Reading had not proposed an Amendment, he would move, that this Bill be read a second time this day six months. The House would commit an act of great injustice, if it were to assent to this Bill; the object of which was, to give the tenant the right to kill and sell the game on all farms where the right had not been specially reserved by the landlord. The hon. Gentleman below him had said, that the Game Bill deprived all the tenants of a right which they previously possessed; but he (Mr. Ross), would venture to observe, that there was hardly a tenant in the country who was deprived of his right. If every tenant in the country were allowed to shoot, the end would be, the destruction of all the game in the country. All Gentlemen in that House were not such keen sportsmen as himself; but he trusted that the majority of the House would not consent to destroy these sports, which operated so powerfully in inducing gentlemen to reside on their estates. He would trouble the House with only one other observation. It was said to be unjust, that tenants should not have the right to kill the game which was fed on their farms; but it must be recollected that they were aware that they would not be allowed to do so, when they took their farms. If they were allowed to kill the game, of course they would have given more for their farms than they actually did pay; and, at present, it was not at all uncommon for gentlemen to make an allowance to their tenants, in cases where it appeared that the game had been destroying any portion of the crops. He trusted that the House would not consent to take away from country gentlemen such a powerful inducement as they now had to live on their estates in the country. The hon. Member concluded by moving his Amendment.

Mr. *Rolfe* hoped the House would not come to a decision on this Bill, with the impression that the state of the law was such as it had been described to be by the opponents of this Bill. Both the hon. member for Reading, and the hon. member for Montrose, were completely wrong as to the law on this subject. It had been said, that there were very few cases in which tenants, who had, at any time, had the right of shooting, had not reserved to themselves this right, in special clauses in their leases. He was able to state, on the authority of a most eminent conveyancer and lawyer, that he never knew a case in which a lease contained a reservation of game for the tenant. Indeed, such a reservation would have been absurd, it would have been as extravagant as if the tenant had stipulated in his lease that he should have the use of the rooms in his farm-house. The only reservation, in reference to game, which ever appeared in a lease before the passing of the Game Bill was—a reservation of it for the landlord. The reason of this was, that, according to the old law, if nothing was said about game, it belonged to the tenant; and, therefore, if it was agreed that the landlord was to have the game, it must be specially reserved. If it was agreed that the tenant was to have it, nothing was said about it. The clause, however, in the Game Bill was to the effect, that, for the future, all the game should be the property of the landlord. But it had been said, that an unqualified person could not shoot—that most tenants were in that situation—and that there were few who were owners of property to the amount of 100*l.* a-year. He had reason to believe, that a great number of tenants had been deprived of the right they possessed, by the operation of the clause of the Game Bill which it was now proposed to alter. He would state a circumstance which came within his own knowledge, in which this clause operated in a most injurious manner. A friend of his, who was a large landed proprietor, hired a farm of 1,200 acres of land, and as the landlord did not reserve the right of shooting to himself, of course it rested with the tenant. This Gentleman was, unfortunately, not on good terms with his landlord, and, therefore, since the passing of the Game Bill, in consequence of the insertion of the clause giving all game to the landlord, he had not felt himself justified in killing a head of game on his farm. He did not know that the landlord had interdicted him from doing so; but the tenant, who was a gentleman of high feelings, said that he did not consider himself to be in a situation to do so. There was another case, in which the clause he alluded to might have had a most injurious operation. A friend of his at the bar, had assured him, that it came before him in his professional character, in which character, indeed, he was called upon to give an opinion on it. The facts of that case were these:—A gentleman hired a manor of 1,500 acres of moor land, in the north of England, for three lives, for the sole and express purpose of grouse-shooting, at a rent of 200*l.* a-year. Last year the owner of the property died; and immediately after, the new landlord warned off the tenant from sporting on the manor, and himself and friends sported on it; at the same time, too, he demanded the 200*l.* a-year, which was only given on the condition that the tenant should have the right of shooting. Fortunately, his legal friend had been enabled, from the mode in which the agreement had been drawn up, to prevent the infliction of a most shameful piece of injustice in this case. These cases, however, seemed to him sufficient to show that the clause, which was introduced as an Amendment into the Game Bill, was attended with great injustice in its operation. It had been said, that this Bill was founded in injustice, as its tendency was to deprive the landlords of their game. If this were really the case, there might be some ground of complaint; but the truth was, that it was only to remedy a piece of injustice, by which the game was transferred from the tenant to the landlord.

Mr. *Lamb* was aware that the House was impatient to come to a decision on this Bill. He would, therefore, take up but a very few minutes in the observations which he felt called upon to make. When the Game Bill had passed through that House, and received the sanction of the other branches of the Legislature, he had not anticipated that, in the short space of a year and a-half, they should have been called upon to make an important alteration in it. He was not disposed to assent to this proposition, because this Bill would, in its operation, be attended with much injustice to the landlords. The hon. member for Maldon had stated two or three cases in which he said that the clause in the Game Bill, which he desired to alter, had been productive of hardship to tenants. He (Mr. Lamb) did not take the same view of those cases as the hon. Member did; and did not consider them of such a nature as to render it incumbent on the House to alter the Game Bill. His hon. and learned friend, the Solicitor General, had also expressed himself warmly in favour of the measure now before the House. If he and other lawyers would pass a little more time in the fields—in the country—in sporting—they would not be so indifferent as they appeared to be to field sports, and so desirous of interfering with these pursuits of country gentlemen. It must be recollected that formerly very few tenants were qualified so as to entitle them to sport; so that the clause in the Game Bill could not have been extensive in its operation. That Bill, also, licensed or qualified a most numerous class of persons to sport, who could not formerly do so; so that the operation of a measure like the present would certainly tend to the destruction of all the game in the country. Again, hon. Gentlemen should remember that the Game Bill constituted a new species of property, which was very properly vested in the owners of the soil. It constituted a property which did not formerly exist, inasmuch as it allowed game to be bought and sold. If the landlords had been aware that a measure like this was likely to receive the sanction of the Legislature, they would not have granted a single lease without reserving to themselves the right of killing game. As it was, he did not believe that, in a single instance, such reservation had taken place; and, therefore, it would be an act of injustice to them to pass this measure. He did not dispute the correctness of the law as laid down by his hon. and learned friend; but he was sure that he was wrong as to the practice.

The House divided on the Amendment. Ayes 43; Noes 29: Majority 14.

Bill postponed for six months.

List of the Noes.

Aglionby, H. A.
Barnard, E. G.
Blamire, W. E.
Brougham, W.
Clay, W.
Childers, J. W.
Duncannon, Visc.
Ewart, W.
Hawes, B.
Hawkins, J. H.
Heathcote, J.
Hughes, Alderman H.
Jervis, J.
Moreton, Hn. A. H.
O'Dwyer, A. C.
Pease, J.
Phillips, M.
Ricardo, D.
Rolfe, R. M.
Rotch, B.
Romilly, J.
Ruthven, E. S.
Ruthven, E.
Strutt, E.
Tancred, H. W.
Warburton, H.
Wason, R.
Young, G. F.

TELLERS.

Campbell, Sir J.
Lennard, T. B.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, April 18, 1833.

Minutes.] Bills. Read a second time:—Seaman's Hospital Society; Indemnity.—Read a third time:—Marine Mutiny.—Committed:—Privy Council; Appellate Jurisdiction.

Petitions presented. By Lord Suffield, from forty-eight Places; by the Duke of Richmond, by the Earl of Morley, the Earl of Radnor, and the Earl of Albemarle, by Lord Dacre, and by Lord Barham, from a great Number of Places,—for the Abolition of Slavery.—By the Earl of Rosebery, from several Places, against the existing System of Church Patronage in Scotland.—By the Bishops of Gloucester and Llandaff, Earl Howe, and a Noble Lord, from several Places,—for a Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By the Earl of Wicklow, from three Places, against the Irish Church Reform.—By Lord Grantham, from the Justices of the Peace for the County of Bedford, against the Beer Bill.—By Lord Dacre, from the Independent Dissenters of Wetherfield, for a Removal of all Civil Disabilities affecting the Dissenters; and from Hoddesdon, for a Revision of the Criminal Laws.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, April 18, 1833.

Minutes.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of Sir Robert Inglis, Account of the Shipping employed in the Trade of the United Kingdom in the year 1832: also Copies of the Notices delivered to the Clerks of the Peace in Great Britain and Ireland, by Jesuits and Members of other Religious Orders, pursuant to Act of Parliament.

Bill. Read a first time:—Bribery at Elections.

Petitions presented. By Sir G. Phillips, by Colonel Gore Langton, by Mr. Briscoe, Mr. Pease, Mr. Peter, Mr. Nicholl, Mr. Jerningham, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Pagett, Mr. Divett, Mr. Tooke, Mr. Penleaze, Mr. Loch, Mr. Rigby Wason, Mr. Pringle, Mr. Godson, Mr. Hodges, Mr. Foley, Mr. Staveley, Mr. Poulter, Mr. Hall, Mr. Cutlar Fergusson, Mr. Warre, Mr. Weyland, and Sir John Astley, from a great Number of Places,—against Slavery.—By Sir Robert Simeon, by Lord Sandon, and by Mr. Pringle, Mr. Halford, and by Mr. Wilson Patten, from several Places,—for the Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By Mr. Wadham Wyndham, from the Clergy of Sarum, against the Church of Ireland Bill.—By Mr. Childers, from Cambridge (County) and the Isle of Ely; by Lord Eastnor, from Reigate; and by Colonel Grant, from the County of Elgin, for a Repeal of the Malt Duty.—By Mr. Brotherton, from Salford, for adjourning the Assizes from Lancaster to Manchester and Liverpool.—By Mr. Tooke, from Truro, for the Removal of the Spring Assizes from Launceston to Truro.—By Mr. Pringle, from Selkirk, and Mr. Weyland, from Charlbury, in favour of the Factories' Regulation Bill.—By Mr. Pease, from the Congregation of Bethel Chapel, Darlington, for redress of the Grievances affecting the Dissenters in relation to Marriages, Parochial Rates, and Registration.—By Mr. Cutlar Fergusson, and by Colonel Grant, from two Places in Scotland,—for an Alteration in the System of Lay Patronage in Scotland.—By Mr. Halford, from Countesthorpe (Leicestershire) complaining of Excessive Poor Rates, and praying for an Equalization of them all over the kingdom.—By Mr. Roebuck, from Bath, for the Abolition of the Punishment of Death for Offences against Property; also for Vote by Ballot.

Observance of the Sabbath.] Major *Beauclerk* presented a petition from the inhabitants of Wandsworth, in the county of Surrey, praying the House not to permit the second reading of the Bill introduced for the better Observance of the Sabbath. The petitioners gave, as their opinion, that the Observance of the Sabbath was better kept now than in former years; and that any further enactments would only go to create dissatisfaction and schism. The hon. Member bore testimony to the respectability of the petitioners, who, he stated, comprised above 200 of the oldest inhabitants of Wandsworth. If he thought for a moment that fine and imprisonment could tend to the propagation and support of the Christian religion, he would willingly vote for the present Bill; but, conscientiously believing the contrary, he could not support it in any of its Clauses.

Mr. *Briscoe* felt the greatest pleasure in bearing testimony to the respectability of the petitioners, but he thought it right to state, that he could not concur altogether in the prayer of the petition, that no legislative enactment whatever should take place on the subject. He had already presented a great many petitions from different parts of the country to the House, and they all prayed that some law might be introduced for the better Observance of the Sabbath-day. He could not, certainly, give his consent to the Bill as at present introduced; but, at the same time, it was very necessary that some legislative enactment should take place; and he believed all parties agreed that it should go to the extent of the entire suppression of Sunday trading [" *Hear, hear!* "]. He was very glad to hear those cheers, for it convinced him that there were Members of that House of the same opinion. The measure was called for by the industrious classes of the country, to enable them to enjoy a day of rest free from the ordinary demands made upon them during the other days of the week. To that extent he would give his support to the Bill of the hon. Baronet. Whether the Bill after the second reading would undergo such an alteration or not as would make it palatable to the country, he could not say, but he should be very sorry if no Bill whatever were carried through; and he was quite sure that in saying so, he expressed the opinion of the whole of the moral, enlightened, and religious people of the kingdom.

Major *Beauclerk* wished to set his hon. colleague right as to the prayer of the petition. It did not pray that no law whatever might be passed on the subject, but that no measure which might tend to restrict the innocent amusements of the people might be passed. The hon. Baronet's Bill went to shut the gates of the Park, which he quite objected to, though he had no objection to any measure which merely had for its object the prevention of Sunday trading.

Mr. *Roebuck* was glad to hear the observations of the hon. member for Surrey regarding the Bill of the hon. Baronet, for he believed that many of the Members of that House had yet to learn the real purport of the Bill. The hon. Gentleman had said, that the object of the hon. Baronet was chiefly to protect the poor man in the enjoyment of a day of rest. Now, he could assure the House that every one of the provisions of the Bill had a directly contrary tendency; for it would compel the poor man's wife to cook his Sunday's dinner at home, instead of being able to have it done at the baker's. He was in favour of some alteration in the state of the law as it regarded the Sabbath, provided that legislation could improve the morality of the people, without interfering with their innocent recreations. He wished, and the people wished, for such a Bill as would prevent trading, so that they might be relieved of the toil and labour of the week, without suffering loss. He did not mean to speak of the motives of the hon. Baronet who brought in the Bill; but he could not help saying, whatever were the motives which he cherished, this Bill seemed to have the intention, and would have the effect, of preventing the people from enjoying themselves quietly, peaceably, innocently, and calmly on the Sabbath day. The steam-boats were not to be allowed to go down the river, and everything was to be done to confine within the unwholesome purlieus and dense houses of this metropolis those industrious artizans, who, confined closely to their workshops all the week, had an opportunity only one day out of seven to enjoy the fresh and healthful air of the surrounding country. His great objection to this Bill was its inequality. The poor man would be prevented from riding on horseback, because he had to hire the horse; but the rich man keeping a horse of his own would be permitted to ride or drive when and where he pleased. If the Bill were passed, he would move a clause, that if a gentleman's carriage or servant were seen in the streets on the Sunday, the master should be fined 50*l.* He would also move that Hyde Park should be shut up, and not a single beau or belle should be seen there; so that the whole metropolis should be converted into one solemn scene of unmitigated gloom and fanaticism.

The petition laid on the Table.

BEER SHOPS.] Mr. *Roebuck* presented a petition from nearly 4,000 in Merthyr Tydvil, in favour of the Beer Shops. This petition was a very singular one—

almost every person who had signed it, had signed it by affixing not their names but their marks; they could not write, therefore it was, in every respect, to be considered the petition of the poor man, and entitled on this subject to great attention. The petitioners denied that the increase of crime was in any degree owing to the Beer Shops; and he was decidedly of opinion, not only that that statement was correct, but that there was no increase of crime. Proof of increase of crime did not depend on the number of committals, or even on the number of convictions; but on the state, habits, and manners of the people. The state of the people had been improving for the last thirty years—the mode of spending their lives and their earnings had been regularly improving. Mr. Place, of Charing-cross, who was originally in humble circumstances, and was peculiarly well able to form an opinion on this subject, had told him lately, that forty years ago, in the alleys and courts of the neighbourhood in which he lived, almost every woman was a prostitute, and almost every man a thief [" *laughter* "]. Hon. Gentlemen might laugh, though the subject when properly considered, was far from being a laughable one; at present that very neighbourhood was occupied by exceedingly respectable and industrious persons; and it had been proved that a similar change had taken place in many other parts of London. He had other petitions to present, and those petitions were from persons in prison praying for relief, but as none of his Majesty's Ministers were in their places, it was impossible for him to present them. He thought it a serious cause of complaint that the petitions of the people were not listened to by his Majesty's Ministers. When it was first proposed that the sittings should be at twelve o'clock, it was distinctly stated, that there would always be at least one Minister present, but that had not been attended to. If the newspaper reporters were not present, neither the Ministers of the Crown, nor the public would know anything about the presentations of petitions in that House, which had become a mere farce. There were none of the Ministers present and the benches were nearly empty.

Mr. *Parrot* said, that he was happy to see one petition on the subject of the beer shops which contained common sense. It appeared to him, that most of the petitions which had been presented to the House proceeded from persons who had not duly considered what would be the effect if the Sale of Beer Act were repealed. By that Act, which had been so much abused, he thought most absurdly and unjustly, the poor man could now buy his pot of beer for 4*d*. instead of 7*d*., which he had paid during the reign of monopoly. The consumption of malt since the passing of that Bill had increased nearly one third; and the additional demand for barley arising from that increased consumption of malt was of vast importance to the agriculturist. For his part, he trusted, that the House would not concur in any measure which would interfere with the most perfect freedom of trade in beer. If any well-considered regulations for maintaining order in the beer-houses should be found necessary, to them he should make no objection; but he must protest in the name of common sense against placing it in the power of any set of men whatever to grant or withhold a license for the sale of beer, as it would lead to great abuses, and be, in his opinion, exceedingly injurious to the community.

Sir *George Phillips* said, he did not want the beer-shops to be shut up, but only that persons should be confined to the purchase of the beer simply from the shops, and to carry it home, there to be drank.

Mr. *Hardy* believed, that every Grand Juror throughout the country, was prepared to come forward to declare, that the beer shops were the most complete nuisances that could possibly exist. Men met there, not to obtain refreshment, but to concert schemes of plunder. They were nurseries of crime. Public houses afforded accommodation to travellers, beer shops could only encourage tippling. It was, supposed when the sale of Beer Act passed, that men would buy their beer as they did their bread and meat, and take it home and consume it, instead of which they went to these beer-shops to carouse and commit all kinds of excesses.

Petition laid on the Table.

The Marquess of *Chandos* rose to submit a Motion to the House with reference to the beer-shops, which, he said, had given rise to an alarming extent of crime and pauperism. It was not his wish to abolish them, but he wished them to be better conducted. At present they were receptacles for every thing bad. He attributed a great deal of the agrarian disturbances of last year to the assemblings in these shops, of which there were no less than 26,000 in the country. He did not, however, desire to put these Houses down altogether, but to put them under the same regulations as the public houses, taking care that the owners of them should be known as respectable persons, which was very far from the case in a great many instances at present. In fact, many of these houses belonged to brewers who put into them the poorest and most dependent men; and when it was considered that these houses were scattered through the country, and that many of them were in remote situations, it could excite no surprise that they were the haunt of the smuggler and the thief. At least every person who kept such a house should be a rated inhabitant. He would not, however, go further into the subject, as he understood that his Motion was not to be opposed, but would content himself, by moving, "that a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the state and management of houses in which beer is sold by retail, under the Act of 1 Will. 4. cap. 64, commonly called 'Beer shops,' with a view to making such alterations in the law as may lead to their better regulation; and to report their observations, together with their opinion thereon."

Colonel *Williams* seconded the Motion. He conceived the beer-shops to be fraught with unqualified abuses. They had added to the amount of pauperism in the country. The remedy for all these abuses was to revert to the original intention, and compel those who were allowed to sell beer, not to allow it to be drunk on the premises.

Lord *Althorp* considered the inquiry desirable, and he would strongly support the appointment of the proposed Committee, though he did not go the length to which the hon. member for Ashton (Colonel Williams), was disposed to go. The hon. Gentleman said, that the original intention of the Legislature was, that beer should not be suffered to be drunk upon the premises. Now, that was a question of regulation; and he need hardly remind the House that a great deal of vexation arose from the manner in which informations could be laid under such an Act. For instance, a man would purchase beer at one of these shops, and drink it with one foot inside the door and the other outside, and then he would lay an information against the proprietor of the House, on the ground of having been allowed to drink beer upon the premises. The only effect of the regulation suggested by the hon. Gentleman, would be, that instead of the beer being drunk on the premises, it would be drunk on some adjacent spot, where more irregularity and greater disorder would take place. These beer-shops should be placed under the same regulations, and have the same restriction imposed upon them, as the ordinary ale-houses. It seemed to him rather a singular anomaly that ale-houses—the proprietors of which were subjected to a strict investigation into their characters before a license was granted to them—should be placed under greater restriction than beer-houses, the proprietors of which were subject to no such inquiry. These beer-shops ought certainly to be put under as strict police regulations as the other public houses, and the owners' respectability ought to be established. He was inclined to think, that the Committee might suggest many useful regulations; and he therefore should make no objection to the Motion.

Colonel *Wood* said, that the Magistrates ought to have quite as much authority with respect to these beer houses as to public houses. If Ministers, however, wanted the people to get good beer, the best thing they could do would be to take off a considerable portion of the Malt-duties, and impose a small duty on Beer, by which means both they and the people would be satisfied.

Mr. *Warburton* thought, that while these beer-shops were put, as proposed, under the same police *surveillance* as the public-houses, they ought, at the same time, to enjoy similar advantages, more particularly with reference to the hours of keeping open, which were at present very unequal. He had read one petition of a case where a beer-shop-keeper was fined for allowing his son to drink a mug of beer in his house after the hour at which he was required to close his shop; and the Magistrate even declared that he would have fined the landlord himself if he had done what he allowed his son to do. This was a most extraordinary state of things, that a man must not drink his own beer after a certain hour. As to putting these beer shops under proper regulations, he concurred in its necessity. He only desired that they should have fair play.

Mr. *Hume* held the same opinion: instead of restricting their licences, he would have them extended. The difficulties under which the beer-shop-keepers laboured should be removed, not added to. He was decidedly of opinion, that these shops had been of great service, for the people had been provided with good and cheap beer by means of them.

Mr. *Baring* was far from agreeing with the hon. member for Middlesex. Though the Sale of Beer Act might, perhaps, have worked well as far as concerned the single county of Middlesex, he had the best reason to believe that in all the rural districts it had been productive of the most ruinous consequences. The hon. member for Middlesex would find his opinion on this subject decidedly opposed to the opinion of the great bulk of the Magistrates, landlords, farmers, and respectable inhabitants of the agricultural districts; who, ninety-nine out of a 100, were strongly opposed to the Beer Bill, from their sad experience of its ruinous effects. The profligacy, the unmitigated mass of corruption and depravity arising from these beer-shops, throughout the country, was appalling. The Commissioners on the Poor-laws, whose experience must entitle their opinion to the most serious attention, decidedly declared that they considered these beer shops had greatly aggravated the misery and distress of the lower orders. If the hon. member for Middlesex were right, nearly the whole country must be wrong. He was glad that the Committee was to be appointed, and he should certainly have gone further into the subject, but that he expected to have a better opportunity of explaining his views than in the House.

Mr. *Pryme* thought, that the Act might be made beneficial if the keepers of beer shops were to brew their own beer, which would put an end to the mischievous monopoly of the beer brewers.

Committee appointed.

COMMUTATION OF TITHES (ENGLAND).] Lord *Althorp*, in rising to submit to the House a measure for the Commutation of Tithes in England, observed, that he need not say that the subject of his Motion was one of great importance; at the same time, he felt that it would not be necessary for him to detain the House at any length by adducing arguments in favour of the general principle of the measure he was about to introduce for the Commutation of Tithes. His chief duty on that occasion would be to explain the details of the measure, by which the principle of commutation was to be carried into effect. It was undoubtedly of great importance that the measure should be substantially just and equitable between the parties without adding to the burthens of the people. Before he, however, entered into the particular subject which he undertook to bring under their consideration, he thought it desirable that he should at the outset disabuse hon. Members and the public with respect to the very exaggerated statements of the amount of the revenues of the Church, which had been broached on several occasions, and very recently again referred to in that House, by an hon. Member. It had been asserted by the hon. Member to whom he alluded, that the Church property of England and Wales, was about 9,000,000*l.* per annum. Now, a more extravagant assertion never was uttered. The total nett income of the Bishops of England and Wales, including the Bishopric of Sodor and Man, was but 158,557*l.*, and the revenues of the Deans and Chapters were 236,358*l.* per annum. He had not exact returns of the income of all the parochial clergy, but had sufficient data for asserting that it was very little more than 3,000,000*l.* sterling per annum, making, with the incomes of the Bishops and the Deans and Chapters, an entire revenue of very little more than 3,500,000*l.* instead of 9,000,000*l.* per annum. It would perhaps be well for him to state, in order to show that he had not understated the revenues of the parochial clergy, the data on which he had founded his estimate. There were 11,400 benefices in England; and he had received returns from 9,660. These returns gave a total of 2,759,657*l.* per annum. and as there was no reason for supposing that the remaining benefices were of a higher average than those 9,660; that would give, taking the mean of them as the average for the whole, speaking in round numbers, a total of 3,257,000*l.* per annum for 11,400 livings of England. This sum equally divided, would give an average of about 285*l.* a-year, which, with the revenues of the prebendaries, deaneries, and chapters, also equally divided among the parochial clergy, would give an average of 300*l.* per annum, and no more. It was hardly necessary for him to contend that, in this country where the Church was very differently situated with regard to the opinions of the people from the Church of Ireland, three hundred pounds per annum was not too high an income for a resident working clergyman of the Church of England. In the present state of this country, they would all agree with him he believed, that the residence of a clergyman was required in each parish. Indeed, there was no man who knew anything of the advantages of a resident clergyman to all classes, whether considered in a religious, a moral, or a political point of view, who would not agree with him in saying, that it was most desirable that there should be a resident clergyman in each parish. That being the case, the amount of income which he had stated could not be thought extravagant when it was devoted to promote that desirable object. But the mode in which the clergy had hitherto been paid had, in practice, injured the beneficial effect of their residence amongst their parishioners. Looking at that in a legislative point of view, it could not be denied that it had produced great disadvantages; and it was greatly desirable, not merely to the prayers, that those disadvantages should be removed, but it was also desirable for the sake of the clergy themselves, that nothing should prevent those good feelings and fellowship which ought to exist between them and their parishioners. He believed that the subject had long been seen in that light by the Legislature, for scarcely one Act had passed in which tithes were concerned—scarcely one Inclosure Bill had gone through Parliament —in which the tithes had not been commuted for a fixed and definite sum. Although there were a great number of parishes in which inclosures had taken place, and in which the tithes had been commuted, yet in the majority of instances where tithes were taken in kind, it had produced great animosity and ill-will among the people. As he said before, nothing was more advantageous than the residence of a clergyman in a parish, but to render that efficacious it was necessary that he should be on good terms with his parishioners. If the resident incumbent were not on good terms with his parishioners, the half of the benefits were lost. The Legislature had, on several occasions, taken the same view, and had endeavoured to avoid these bad effects, while it had at the same time provided for the clergy on fair and liberal terms, so as to prevent collision and differences with their parishioners. Having made these observations, and believing that the House would go along with him in thinking that a Commutation of Tithes was most desirable, both for the clergymen and their parishioners, he should next proceed to state the principles of his measure. He knew that in many parts of the country extraordinary expectations were entertained as to the measure; but what he had already said must satisfy the House that the object of his measure was not in any way striking. He was not about to take any step which would make a great sensation; but to propose a fair and equitable measure, which should be just to both parties. It was desirable that a measure of this kind should be, in the first place, purely permissive, and that the parties should agree as to any arrangement they thought desirable should be made. Even a permissive measure would, he hoped, to a great extent, lead to friendly commutations. He wished, therefore, that a permissive measure should have its fair trial first, although he was free to confess that he did not think that a purely permissive measure would have all the effect that was desirable. He would, therefore, propose, first, that the measure should give permission to the clergyman and the tithe-owner, and the tithe-payer; because, when he spoke of the clergyman, he did not think it right to confine the commutation simply to the clergyman, but that the same measure should be applicable to a lay impropriator. The measure should, then, in the first instance, give permission to the tithe-payer and the tithe-owner, whether a clergyman or a lay impropriator, to make an arrangement for a perpetual commutation for a corn rent. He meant a rent varying according to the price of corn. He need not state that, in making this proposition, it was necessary that they should not confine themselves to a money value. They should take something as the test of the commutation which varied less in value than money. The clergyman, however, should not be allowed to commute tithes in perpetuity, without the consent of the patron of his living and the Bishop of his diocese; neither should the tenant be allowed to commute the tithes of his farm, without the consent of his landlord. His first principle would be to give a period of twelve months from the passing of the Bill, to permit the tithe-payer and the tithe-owner, by mutual consent, to commute tithes into a perpetual corn rent; but if, after the expiration of twelve months, that were not generally done, and in many instances it would, probably, not be done, although he believed in a vast number it would be—if, after that period, the commutation were not accomplished, he then proposed that either the tithe-payer or tithe-receiver, without making it necessary for a whole parish to agree—for he would allow any individual tithe-payer to give notice—he then proposed that either the tithe-payer or the tithe-receiver should be allowed to give notice that he intended to commute the tithes. Valuators should then be appointed on both sides in the manner he should mention hereafter. It was of great importance that the valuators should be men of great respectability, and there were other reasons than this why they should not be indiscriminately selected, merely at the option of the parties themselves, but only from a class of persons previously appointed. It was his intention, therefore, to propose that a certain number of those valuators should be nominated by the Bishop of the diocese, and that an equal number should be nominated by the Justices of the Quarter Sessions for the county. It might thus frequently happen that the parties knowing the individuals who had been appointed as valuators, would both select the same, so that only one valuator would be required for both. Thus, each party, either the tithe-payer or the tithe-owner, might give notice to the other party that he intended to appoint a valuator; and, notice being given, the valuation would proceed. Any person, however, who knew anything of the state of tithe property in this country, must know that if an actual valuation were to take place for titheable property in each parish, the effect would be to raise the tithes throughout England most enormously, and would most certainly prevent any commutation from taking place; and, although such a proposition might seem to be founded in justice, it would really and practically be most unjust. His plan, therefore, was, that the valuators should not take the tithes at the amount which ought to be paid, but at the amount which had been actually paid and enjoyed through several previous years. The valuers, therefore, appointed would not have the duty of valuing the tithe on the ground; they would only have to ascertain what had been the amount paid during an average of seven years previously. He thought, however, it would be desirable to give them some degree of latitude in making that valuation, and he proposed that they should have the power of altering the valuation either above or below the amount of tithe actually paid to the extent of a certain per-centage, which should not, however, vary much from what had been the actual payments. It should not vary more than from five to ten per cent., though he should think five per cent sufficient. The valuation thus made, the valuators should commute that valuation for a perpetual corn rent, estimated in different kinds of grain, wheat, barley, and oats, and the average of the value of those kinds of grain should be the perpetual rent imposed on the land in lieu of tithes. He also proposed that these valuators should value the different portions of the tithes. Suppose, for example, an individual wished to make an arrangement for his tithe, it was obvious that his land might vary in its qualities, and it was necessary that the amount of the tithe should be fixed on each portion, or it would be impossible to dispose of any part of that property, unless it was known what amount of tithe rent it was subject to. If the valuators should differ, an award by an umpire must settle the dispute. It was necessary that the appointment of the umpire should rest with some important and eminent person; and he should propose that the senior Judge of Assize should have the appointment. There were cases in which tithes had already been compounded for, and in such cases the composition would be taken as the basis of the valuation for the tithe rent. Whenever the composition was a fixed payment, the valuators would only have to determine its value as a corn rent. This mode made it necessary, in order to have an accurate account of the corn rent, that the Quarter Session should ascertain the average during the preceding years of the price of the different kinds of grain. He proposed, on the valuation being made, that the tithe receiver should have the option of being paid in money or in corn rent during a fixed period of years. Every clergyman should have the option of fixing this during the period of his incumbency;

and if the tithe owner was a lay impropriator, he should not have less for his option than seven years. All these, however, were points of detail which the House could consider in the progress of the Bill. If the tithe-receiver chose to receive his tithe in grain, the tithe-payer should have the option in which grain he would pay, and one person might select one grain, and another another, according to different circumstances. He had said, that he proposed to allow individuals to make an arrangement with the individuals who were the proprietors, it being in his opinion desirable that individuals should have that power, as well as the whole parish. In such cases an individual, or a number of individuals, should appoint a valuator, who should value for them as individuals. In the case of an existing lease, tenants might be allowed to make a commutation, without the consent of the landlord, for the term of his lease. The landlords also might have the power to make an arrangement with the tithe-receivers whether they had granted a lease or not. If that were the case, the tenants would, of course, be bound to pay the landlord what was due to the clergyman; in fact, the landlord would in such a case possess the rights of the clergyman. He had but one observation to make in reference to the cases of disputed moduses. There were no cases of disputed moduses that would not be in course of litigation by next July, and as this Bill would not come into operation until after that period, no litigated case of modus would come under the operation of its provisions. He had now stated to the House the principles of this measure. The object which he had in view in proposing it was to render a commutation of tithes upon just and equitable principles easy and practicable for the country at large. It appeared to him, as he had already remarked, that the permissive operation of this measure would have considerable effect in consequence of the power which afterwards existed in the Bill of a compulsory nature. He had proposed, as he had already mentioned, a subsequent compulsory power for carrying into effect the provisions of the Bill; but when he said a compulsory power, it should be recollected that it would not be compulsory unless one party should consent to the adoption of it. He entertained little doubt that the effect of this measure would be pretty generally to produce a commutation of tithes throughout the country—an effect that he thought would be productive of the greatest possible advantage. He did not think that at the present time it would be desirable to propose any measure that would go to the extent of an actual compulsion of a commutation of tithes in this country. The difficulties that beset the question were so many and so great, that, after having given it the best consideration he could, he was of opinion that it would be hardly possible to propose any measure that would be equitable and just for an actual and forcible commutation of tithes throughout England. Having stated thus much, he hoped that it would not be considered that, in bringing forward this measure, his Majesty's Government had not at present under their consideration other measures respecting the Church of England. There was one other measure which was absolutely necessary, which pressed more or less in point of time for immediate consideration, and which he hoped in a very short time either he or some other Member of his Majesty's Government would have the honour of proposing, either in that House or in the other House of Parliament—he alluded to a measure for preventing, for the future, pluralities in the Church of England. With regard to other measures, there were difficulties in the way of their adoption, but, nevertheless, he hoped and trusted that at an early period other propositions would be brought forward to meet other evils. He would not pledge himself further at present than to say, that some measures would be brought forward by Government for that purpose. As he had said at the commencement of his address to the House, he would repeat, that this measure, though it did not appear to be one of great magnitude, yet, if it should effect that which would be of great and general advantage to the public—namely, a commutation of tithes, at an early period throughout the country —he conceived that it would be entitled to be looked upon as a measure of considerable magnitude indeed, though at first sight people might not be inclined to attach such importance to it. This measure was pregnant with this great advantage to the landed and agricultural interests of the country, that it would give them the power of employing their capital upon their land, without being checked by the collection of tithes, which had always been a check upon the improvement of agricultural property in this country. But if, on the one hand, the agriculturists, for the benefit of their property, should seek to enforce this measure, it might be said that the clergyman, on the other hand, would resist it. He did not think that they would do so. He was sure that if they did they would not be consulting their own advantage; whatever they might lose in the amount of their tithes by a commutation, taking into account the improvement which would immediately follow in the value of land by the expenditure of capital upon it, they would be more than sufficiently compensated for such loss by the advantages which they would reap in being relieved from the difficulties and dangers occasioned by those disputes and quarrels generated between them and their parishioners by the present tithe system, and to which a commutation of tithes would effectually put an end. The noble Lord concluded by moving for leave to bring in a Bill to effect a commutation of tithes in England.

Mr. *Baring* asked, whether the valuators were to take the Poor-rates into consideration, for the tithes were, at present, rated to the poor?

Lord *Althorp*, in answer, said, that it was quite true, he believed, that wherever a composition for tithes had been made, it included the Poor-rates, and that it would be only just and right that the valuators should take them into their consideration hereafter, whenever a commutation was about to be made. It would be for the public benefit that the clergyman should have an interest in the Poor-rates, in order to ensure their due administration.

Sir *Robert Inglis* thought the permission of the noble Lord was like a *conge d'élire*; it was permission for a year, and compulsion at the end of it. The measure kept the word of promise to the ear, but "broke it to the hope." He would not then enter into the subject; he would only notice the declaration of the noble Lord, that the same rule was to be applied both to the clergy and the lay impropriators; and he would express a hope, that that principle might be extended to all parts of the empire.

Mr. *Hume* admitted, that if each clergyman had only 300*l.* a-year, as the noble Lord said, that it was not too large an income for gentlemen of education. He objected however, to the mode of appointing valuators, because it threw almost the whole power of nominating them into the hands of the clergy, one series of them being appointed entirely by clerical persons, and another by the Sessions, of whom one-half was also composed of clergymen. In his opinion, the best method would be for the Government to take upon themselves the appointment of these functionaries. Another very strong objection which he had against the system proposed by the noble Lord, arose from the injustice of appointing the future payments of tithes upon the basis of the present payments; the consequence of which would be, that the clergy in those parishes where the incumbents had been screwing up the tithes to the utmost possible extent would continue to derive a benefit from their exactions, while the more conscientious portion of the clergy, who had pursued a different course, were only to have a continuance of that income which they at present enjoyed. The plan would thus operate as a reward for former oppression, and a punishment for former leniency. At the same time he was not inimical to the proposed changes; but he considered, that the details of the plan of the noble Lord required very considerable modifications before they could answer the objects for which they were intended. The noble Lord did not seem to be aware of the difference which at present existed in different parts of England with respect to the amount of tithes paid—a difference which prevailed to such an extent, that any plan which did not embrace the consideration of it must be essentially defective. The noble Lord did not appear to be aware of the immense advantage which would arise from the adoption of some system of greater simplicity. He hoped, therefore, that the noble Lord would be persuaded to simplify the details of his measure, and also that Commissioners should be appointed to fix a money value on the tithes, instead of a fluctuating value in corn, and that these Commissioners should derive their authority directly from the Exchequer or from that House. He thought the Government, in short, ought to take the whole into their own hands, and pay the clergy from the Exchequer. If such a course had been adopted forty years ago, the Church would at present be in a much better situation in every respect.

Sir *Robert Peel* said, he was by no means averse from a general plan for the commutation of tithes on any principle which could be considered equitable to all parties whose interests were concerned, and he saw nothing in the principles of the noble Lord's measure which should make him oppose it. He could not, indeed, at once say, whether he should oppose or support the Bill of the noble Lord; for it frequently happened that a measure wore a very different complexion, when stated in all its particulars, from that which it assumed on its first announcement. His experience had sufficiently convinced him of that fact, as well as of the fact, that the success of any such plan must depend entirely upon the details, which were not yet before the House. He, therefore, intended to reserve his opinions upon the subject until he should see the whole plan upon paper, when he should be able to say whether the scheme deserved to succeed, and whether it would be just in its operation with respect to the clergy. He had heard with great pleasure one remark of the hon. member for Middlesex, that an income of 300*l.* a-year was not more than sufficient for a gentleman who had received an expensive education, and was required to perform the duties of a clergyman. He, therefore, hoped, that when they came to consider the Bill with regard to the Irish clergy, he should have the concurrence of the hon. member for Middlesex in a proposition for exempting all livings of 200*l.* or 300*l.* a-year from taxation; because if 300*l.* a-year were not too much for an English clergyman, residing in a country where he was exposed to no risk, how much stronger were the reasons for exempting an Irish clergyman from any deductions from his annual income, when it was only of the same amount, considering that he lived in a country where he was exposed to so much greater risks? As for the alterations proposed by the hon. member for Middlesex, in order to simplify the system of tithes, he (Sir Robert Peel) preferred the plan of the noble Lord, and was convinced, that any system of making the Government the collector of tithes would be both expensive and less efficient than if it rested with the parochial authorities. At the same time, he was of opinion, that the success of any plan of this nature would mainly depend on its simplicity; and he was inclined to think that some part of the noble Lord's plan might be advantageously modified. He did not exactly comprehend the reasons of the noble Lord for proposing, that, after the lapse of a year, either the tithe payer or the tithe receiver should have it in his power, if the opposite party had taken no means for the commutation of the tithe, to enter into a compulsory arrangement; he thought, that the period was rather short, and that it would be much better that the arrangement should be voluntary on both sides. Considering the extent and complication of the change, he thought a year much too little. As to the part of the plan which proposed to make the commutation compulsory, at the instance either of the tithe-payer or the tithe-receiver, it was all very well with respect to the tithe receiver, but if the noble Lord persisted in extending it to the tithe payer, it would give rise to a great deal of difficulty. Supposing, for instance, that there were forty tithe-payers, and only a few refused their consent to the commutation, it was easy to observe what a complicated system would arise, and how extensive a field for litigation would be opened. If one person out of forty were to oppose the introduction of the new system, did the noble Lord intend that the thirty-nine should be compelled to retain the old system? There was another part of the noble Lord's plan which appeared to him also to be liable to very considerable objections—that by which the tithe-receiver was to receive his tithe either in money or grain. It was to be left to the payer to determine in what species of grain he should pay it—whether oats, barley, or wheat; that was to say, whether fifty bushels of wheat, or a larger quantity of oats or barley. The noble Lord would see how many questions, if this scheme were adopted, would arise respecting the value of the grain, and for determining whether the corn was of good quality or not. He would not venture to say that he had rightly understood the noble Lord's meaning, but, as he conceived it, the plan would lead to these consequences.

Lord *Althorp* did not mean that the party should pay in kind, but a sum of money equal to the value of so many bushels of grain.

Sir *Robert Peel:* Then it was the noble Lord's plan, that if the tithes were now worth 100 bushels of wheat, the land which paid them should be permanently charged with the payment of the value of 100 bushels. He apprehended, therefore, that the tithe would be variable with the price of corn. He should think also that it would be preferable to send down a single valuator, instead of allowing the adverse parties each to choose one, because the expense would be extremely great. He thought one objection taken by the hon. member for Middlesex was valid—namely, that in parishes in which tithes had been previously exacted with rigour, the present rate being taken as the standard, more than was properly due might be given, while in others, where the incumbents had been more lenient, the Church would be deprived of its rights. He had, certainly, considerable doubts respecting the measure; but he intended to give no positive opinion at present. All he had to say was, let justice be done to all parties.

Mr. *Cutlar Fergusson* rose merely for the purpose of offering a suggestion to the noble Lord, which might be conveniently done at that stage of the discussion; it respected the lay impropriations. It appeared to him, that it would be desirable to give the landlord the power, not merely to compound with the lay impropriators, but to purchase them outright, and to free the land from the burthen for ever. In respect to the tithes payable to the clergy, it was necessary to preserve a permanent fund for their maintenance. In Scotland, upon the happy settlement of the question of tithes in that country, in the time of Charles 1st, it was provided, that the lay impropriators, called Titulars, might be compelled to sell the right to tithe, at a certain number of years' purchase of the ascertained value, whilst such a settlement was not permitted in respect to the tithe payable to the clergy. It would be well if the history of the settlement of the great question of tithe in Scotland were referred to and consulted on the present occasion. It had done more for Scotland than any other measure, or, perhaps, than all other means that had since been adopted for the good of that country. For nearly 200 years it had been in the power of the landholder, by having his tithes valued, to prevent a tax being levied for the future on his industry, and on the outlay of his capital, in improving the land. The plan was simple, and had been completely successful; the tithes in Scotland were valued by Commission, appointed by the Crown; and he was disposed to prefer that to the mode proposed by the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He thought, also, that from the plan for ascertaining the value proposed by the noble Lord, there might arise, in many cases, the injustice pointed out by the hon. member for Middlesex. There would, however, be other opportunities for discussing these points, and he would content himself with congratulating the House and the country on the prospect which was at last opened to them of getting rid of an odious and vexatious system, which would prove a measure of relief to the people and of peace to the Established Church.

Dr. *Lushington* observed, that the litigation which had taken place for the last 150 years on the subject of tithes, justified the introduction of some measure like the present. The system had gone on from century to century; had become complicated by so many minute and difficult questions, that it was impossible for any one to expect that a plan could be devised by which the numberless points which had hitherto perplexed the subject should be reduced to one simple method. If any observations of his noble friend had excited his surprise, it was his remark, that the measure was one which was not calculated to excite a great sensation. It was a question in which almost every individual in the kingdom was interested. He was persuaded, that the estimates of his noble friend respecting the amount of the revenues of the clergy would turn out to be perfectly correct, and that they did not exceed 3,250,000*l.*; but it was a great object to collect those revenues with the least possible annoyance to the people. With respect to the proposition of the hon. member for Middlesex, that the whole business should be managed by the Exchequer, he objected to it on every ground; he objected to it, first, on grounds of principle, because he thought the Government ought not to possess such a power. He objected to it, secondly, on grounds of practice, on account of the enormous expense into which it would lead the State; and, thirdly, he objected to it on account of the dissatisfaction which it would cause in every part of the country. It had been also stated, that inconveniences would arise from the greater lenity with which tithes had been exacted in one parish than in others; but the noble Lord had himself provided against that objection by intrusting the valuers with the power of increasing or diminishing the tithes by five per cent or ten per cent. For his own part, he thought ten per cent should be the extent of this discretionary power, rather than five per cent. Certainly the sooner the very name of tithes became extinct, the better it would be for all parties; for if they looked to the history of the Church for the last thirty or forty years, it would be seen that these had been the principal cause of alienating the feelings of the people from the Establishment. He approved of the proposition of his noble friend not to render the commutation compulsory in the first instance. His noble friend's plan would, he was sure, create a feeling of satisfaction amongst all classes interested in this question, and in particular it would be hailed as a great boon by the clergy of the Established Church, whom it would relieve from much odium, and whose influence over their flocks it would considerably increase.

Mr. *Baring* thought it extremely desirable that the proposition of the noble Lord should come fully before the public, in order that the general opinion with respect to it might be ascertained. It certainly comprehended no spoliation of any kind, nor was it at all a party question. At the same time he thought that the objections made by the hon. member for Middlesex and others, against making the present payments the basis of the measure, were almost insurmountable. When the injustice of taking as data in one case payments in parishes where tithes had been screwed up by the clergymen to the greatest possible extent, and in another case payments in parishes where tithes had been liberally suffered to remain much below the real amount, was considered, he thought that this would be obvious. A general valuation would be preferable to such a system. Adverting to the question which had been raised as to the poor's rate, he must observe, that no one could read the melancholy Report which had recently been made upon that subject, and assert that it ought to be permitted to remain in its present state. In some parishes in the south of England the rates were 27*s*., and in one as high as 32*s*. in the pound! What was to become of the clergymen in those parishes? There might be rent in such places, but there would be no tithes. Another evil was, that in some parishes it was the constant custom to work, as it was called, the clergyman by means of a poor's rate, and the noble Lord's plan would enable the farmer still to do that. There was one point which it would be indispensable to consider in the proposed measure. He adverted to land which was in a state of garden cultivation; and to land where hops and other valuable produce were grown. On some land of that description the tithes amounted to 40*s*. an acre, which was more than the rent. If the commutation were formed upon the present value of the crops of such land, a charge would be perpetuated on it, which at some future period, it might not be able to meet. All these and other difficulties ought to be looked at carefully, and without bias or prejudice. There must be some provision in the Bill for existing contracts; an alteration in the Corn-laws for example, or some other legislative measure, might have the effect of entirely throwing out of cultivation land which was at present in tillage. Some regulation must be introduced in the Bill with respect to such land; for, if it were subjected in perpetuity to the tithe which it at present paid, the landholder might, at some future period, be deprived of the whole of his property. At all events, it was exceedingly desirable that the question should be settled, for the greatest misapprehensions were at present entertained in the country with respect to it; even to the extent that no clergyman was to have more than 400*l*. a-year, that the surplus of tithes, which would be saved to the nation was 4,000,000*l*. and that taxes to the amount of 8,000,000*l*. were to be repealed.

Lord *John Russell* concurred with his hon. friend that it was desirable the question should be settled. In answer to the observations of the hon. member for Essex, that if the present payments were taken as the basis of the future arrangement, the parishes where the tithes were now screwed up to the highest pitch would henceforward have to pay too much, and the parishes where the tithes were now less than the fair amount, would henceforward have to pay too little, he observed that the objection had struck his Majesty's Government; but that, after much consideration, it appeared to them, that any other course would be still more liable to animadversion.

If the whole of the tithes were taken, and an average estimated from every parish, the result would still be hard and unequal. A provision, however, might no doubt be introduced into the Bill, in some degree to meet the objection of the hon. Gentleman. He considered tithes to be one of the greatest grievances in the country, whether they were in lay or ecclesiastical hands; more especially the latter, as they constantly tended to produce ill will, where only good will ought to exist.

Colonel *Torrens* congratulated the House and the country on the proposition for a commutation of tithes, the effect of which would be, that the revenue of the Church would no longer be, as it now was, a tax on capital. He trusted the proposition would give general satisfaction; as he was convinced that, with some modifications, it would be an admirable improvement on the present system.

Sir *Matthew White Ridley* concurred in the plan of Government, and if he could have his way it should go much further. A great advantage would arise from a commutation of the tithes, for he knew in several parishes where it had taken place, that the best effects had followed it. At present a law existed for the commutation of tithes, but it had a directly contrary effect, inasmuch as the appointment of the valuator was placed by it in the hands only of the landowner and the Bishop. He should like to know if by the plan now proposed, the valuationwas to be made on a given quantity of produce in one year, or was it to be taken on an average of three, five, or seven years (on an average of years)? He would give the principle of the Bill his best support.

Sir *Robert Price* approved of the measure, but thought great difficulties would arise with respect to its details. All that could be done upon the subject, however, was to enter upon it with an earnest desire to conquer those difficulties if possible. One of the greatest of those difficulties would be to simplify the measure, and at the same time to do equal justice to all parties. Sensible as he was, however, of the great importance of the proposition, he was not disposed at present to dwell on the objections to it.

Lord *Sandon* expressed a hope that no new valuation of the land would take place under the proposed plan of the noble Lord; for if that were to occur, the tithes would be raised in some places, would be reduced in others, and would end in general dissatisfaction. There were many difficulties attending the subject which he hoped might be removed in Committee; and to the general principle of the plan he would give his support.

Mr. *Halcomb* wished to know if the tithes on hay and wood, in general, and what were called small tithes, were included in the plan of the noble Lord?—[Lord *Althorp* said "All."]—There was considerable difficulty in settling the tithes of sheep, lambs, wool, &c.; for if a farmer had lands in different parishes, and he drove sheep from one farm to another in different parishes for lambing, or for shearing, the tithe would be taken in that parish where the shearing or the lambing might take place, and not in the parish from which the sheep had been just driven for greater convenience to the farmer. How was this to be remedied? He thought the best way to obtain a fair valuation of tithes would be to take the average value of a number of years. Those clergymen who had insisted upon getting their whole legal rights had been designated extortioners and oppressors; but were they, sitting there as legislators, justified in asserting, that demanding the payment of a legal claim was either extortion or oppression? Such conduct on the part of Members of that House would be most unfair and improper. Instead of rendering a remission of tithes compulsory, he submitted, whether it would not be better to leave the question of reduction to the discretion and good feeling of the clergy themselves; and if that were done he was satisfied that the Bishops and beneficed clergy would speedily meet the wishes of the tithe-payers. Another subject that deserved their maturest deliberation was the mode in which the payment of tithes was to be secured, and whether making it a charge upon the land would not bear oppressively upon the landlord. Before he sat down he was anxious to know from the noble Lord whether the measure had been introduced with the consent and approbation of the heads of the Church, or whether its introduction had been determined upon without any reference having been made to them? He wished to have this question answered for the satisfaction and information of the clerical body, who, being excluded from the House, had no direct means of ascertaining the fact themselves.

Mr. *Herbert Curteis* feared the proposed arrangement would prejudice the landowner, and that the way in which the remission of tithes was to be made would prove alike unequal and unjust. He thought that it would be most advisable to allow clergymen, wherever it could be effected, to commute their tithe for land.

Lord *Althorp*, in reply, said, that the heads of the Church had certainly been communicated with upon the subject of this measure, but that he was not authorised to say whether it was their intention to give it their consent or to oppose it. His Majesty's Government felt, that they should not be justified in bringing forward such a measure without first communicating with the Bishops; but although that course had been taken, he was bound to observe that the Bishops were not in a situation to pronounce any opinion upon it, as it affected the beneficed and parochial clergy rather than them. The hon. member for Middlesex (Mr. Hume) had spoken of the propriety of equalizing tithes; but, however desirable the equalization of tithes might be, the hon. Member ought to have recollected, that it was an object which could not be accomplished without very great difficulty. The attention of the Government had been applied to this and to other Reforms in the Church, but, at present, they were unable to determine on the exact course they should pursue, or to give any pledge as to what should or should not be done. He admitted that there was great difficulty in the mode of collecting tithes, and fixing the amount to be remitted and he had therefore stated, that he intended to allow the valuators to enhance or lower the value during the last seven years, from five to ten per cent, as one mode of meeting that difficulty, but without of course, intending to say that his suggestion would obviate it altogether. But the subject was one fraught with so much difficulty, look at it how you would, that it would be presumption to hope that any measure of this description could be brought forward which would not be open to many and serious objections. To deal with the matter at all, the advantages and objections must be weighed one against the other, and the way in which the valuation was intended to be made was, he believed, likely to produce less dissatisfaction than any other that had hitherto suggested itself to his mind. The advisable course was first to make the valuation, and then determine on the reduction to be made: and if any other plan were adopted, he feared it would be open to the charge of spoliation, which had already been advanced against the proposers of the alteration. So far as the present possessors were concerned, the charge of injustice to them would be got rid of, inasmuch as they were not to be disturbed. But the hon. member for Middlesex objected to the valuators being appointed by the Sessions. That was a subject the Government had considered; but thinking it by no means desirable to leave the appointment to Grand Juries, they had suggested the other mode as the preferable one. It was not intended that the tithe rent should vary otherwise than as it might, in common with all other incomes, be affected by the value of money; and it was proposed that the prices of grain, by which it was to be regulated, should be settled every ten years, and that the average of the year immediately preceding should regulate its amount. Some hon. Gentlemen thought there would be difficulty in commuting a part and leaving a part uncommuted. This was not the fact, as the system of partial commutation existed at the present time. It could, he was satisfied, occasion no inconvenience whatever. Although he did not intend to object to the partial commutation of tithe for land, he could not believe that it would be desirable to place in the hands of the clergy land to any extent. He had now answered all the observations that had been made, and he must say that the reception the measure had met with had given him unfeigned satisfaction. The difficulties with which it was pregnant could be discussed more at length when they entered upon the details; but he trusted that the result would be a measure which would do injustice to no man, and be extremely beneficial to a large class of his Majesty's subjects.

Leave given to bring in the Bill.

PAYMENT OF OFFICES.] Mr. *Hume* said, that in rising to submit to the House the motion of which he had given notice relative to sinecure offices, or offices executed by deputy, in naval, military, civil, or colonial service, he was anxious to guard himself against being misunderstood, or having a wrong interpretation put upon the motives by which he was actuated. He had, in the early part of the present Session, introduced two motions for the abolition of offices to which no duties were attached, and he had done so with a view to save the country the amount of the salaries attached to these offices. Objections had been taken to the manner in which he had introduced both his first and second motions. By some hon. Members it was urged that he had not sufficiently explained his meaning or objects; while others stated, that, however justified he might be on principle, he had not chosen the proper time for proposing the reduction. He was not aware that he had committed any error, either in the one case or the other, although it might perhaps have happened that he had not made himself so clearly understood as he was anxious to do on both occasions. The motion to which he was now anxious to call the attention of the House was one founded on a broader basis than either of his former ones, and his Majesty's Ministers might, as they pleased, admit or deny its propriety; in either case he would leave the result to be judged by the country. He had received several communications from persons in different districts in the country, to whom their respective Representatives had assigned the grounds upon which they had voted against him on both the occasions alluded to; and he felt bound to add that the constituency almost universally regretted that their Representatives had not taken a right view of the question. It was not his intention to detain the House by going back at any length into what had taken place at former periods, but he would observe that when, in 1808 and 1809, the House was pressed to lessen the expenses of the country, a Finance Committee was appointed to inquire how far the burthens under which the people laboured could be reduced. That Committee was composed, for the greater part, of officers belonging to Government, and after a laborious and extended inquiry, they came to a decision that a reduction ought to take place with respect to persons whom they divided into three classes:—1, persons holding actual sinecures; 2, persons holding offices in the nature of sinecures; and 3, persons holding offices which were executed by deputy, and where, though there was some work to be done, it was not of a nature or extent to warrant the salary. That Committee afforded the best account of sinecures and sinecure offices that had been laid before the House. In the following year it published an amended report (that of 1809) to which he would refer hon. Members, in order to see how those sinecures had been arranged. He sincerely hoped and trusted that they had now arrived at a period when this oppressive system of sinecures would be altogether done away with. The first schedule he found was the Court of Chancery, where sinecures existed to the amount of 20,985*l.* per annum. In the next he found that in the Court of King's Bench, the Court of Common Pleas, the Court of Exchequer, and the Prerogative Court, there were sinecures to the amount of 106,616*l.* There were other sinecures in the Courts of Law in England, amounting to 50,000*l.*, and in the different colonies and colonial departments, amounting together to 156,000*l.* In short the Committee were so sensible that they must meet the public eye, that they came to a resolution which he would read, but he must first observe that they had pointed out altogether sinecures in England and the colonies to the amount of 199,137*l.*; exclusive of 30,000*l.* in Scotland, and 74,000*l.* for Ireland, of which, sinecures to the amount of a sum of 31,000*l.* were in Courts of Law. A motion had been made last year with a view to show the amount of sinecures and sinecure places existing in this country. That motion had not been carried as it would have shown the extravagant amount to which those sinecures had extended. He therefore, wished the House to understand that in introducing this Motion he was actuated more by principle in the abolition of sinecures than in the actual amount of their reduction, although he felt that that reduction would be productive of great good to the country; and if he was able to satisfy the House that no portion of the public money ought to be given where no service was performed for it, then, he trusted, that he should have made out a case that, in a time of pressure like the present, with our large debt and heavy burthen of taxation, with the weight of our army, naval, and civil establishments pressing upon us, we ought to be relieved from all superfluous and unnecessary expenditure. It should be known that while the people were anxious to pay so far as they were able, and under every privation, all that was required for the service of the State, they had a right to expect to be delivered from the pressure caused by those who received large sums of the public money without performing any single act of service for it. The House would, perhaps, feel astonished if he were to state that the amount of sinecures and pensions within a comparatively short period had been the means of adding at least one-half the present amount of the national debt. Taking the amount of sinecures and pensions themselves, and looking to the manner in which, by corruption and corrupt influence, they had been the means of perpetuating abuses, and supporting extravagant and expensive Governments, it would be found that former Ministers had maintained their influence, and increased the debt by means of sinecures, at least to the amount he had mentioned. Thus it was, that laws were passed by which the people were oppressed, and their pockets drained of their last shilling. He was aware that many hon. Members might question his statement, and inquire the grounds upon which it was made. He would quote a parliamentary document, laid upon the table of the House in 1816; but, independent of that, the House must perceive that if all the money expended in useless places and pensions—in short, if every unnecessary shilling laid out since the time of William 3rd, had been placed at compound interest, the amount would go near to paying off the national debt. By the parliamentary document, published on the 3rd of April, 1816, signed Henry Goulburn, it appeared that there were thirty-three places in eight of our islands, the holders of which were non-resident, and discharged the duties by deputy, the salaries of which amounted to 53,000*l.* a-year. As a specimen he would mention the case of an honourable Mr. Percy W. Wyndham, who had held a situation in Jamaica of 4,000*l.* a-year (filled by deputy), from the year 1763; so that, counting up to 1816, he held it fifty-three years. He had during that long period been a receiver of the public money; he had received with interest 238,500*l.* of the public money, while every one of the duties attached to his office was executed by deputy. Another person holding an office in the same island, was the honourable T. C. Wyndham, who had received 34,000*l.* of the public money; so that these two Wyndhams had pocketted no less than 272,000*l.* of the people's money for doing nothing. Lord Braybrook held the situation, which he executed by deputy, of Provost Martial in Jamaica, and received for it 2,100*l.* a-year. He was quite a child when he received the appointment. Sir Edward Nepean had held a place in the same island, from which he had received altogether the sum of 169,000*l.* Mr. Charles Greville had also received a large sum from a sinecure place abroad. A Mr. Augustus Sullivan had received 68,000*l.*; a Mr. King, 39,000*l.* According to his calculations, these seven persons had received no less than 1,620,000*l.* of the public money, from the period of their appointment to those offices down to 1816, and yet this formed but a small part of the sinecure places and pensions which existed in the country, and this sum represented but a small part of what was paid for no services whatever. The Committee of the 13th of June, 1809, agreed to a resolution to the following effect:—"That it is the opinion of this Committee that sinecure offices, and offices the duties of which are discharged by deputy, are unnecessary and inexpedient as a means of rewarding public services." And, be it observed, that this was the opinion of a Committee consisting, for the greater part, of Government officers and their supporters. A Motion, founded upon the report of that Committee, was submitted by Mr. Davies Gilbert Giddy, which was negatived; and since that period the question had never been fairly brought under the consideration of the House. The only defence that he had heard set up in favour of those sinecure places was, that his Majesty ought to have it in his power to reward the services of persons who had deserved well of their country by long and meritorious exertions. From this it would appear as if those places were paid at once out of the Exchequer; but such was not the case. The fact was, that most of those emoluments were raised in the most objectionable manner. They were, in a great measure, raised out of fees and exactions which clogged the wheels of justice, and to which suitors in our Courts ought never to have been subjected. He would mention a few of those persons who profited by those fees, and he begged the attention of the House to them for a moment. In one schedule he found an office which he understood was to be abolished—it was that of Auditor of Land Revenue (Sir W. G. Cooper), 3,300*l.*; then there was the auditorship held by Lord Grenville, with a salary of 4,000*l.* Then there was the office of the Teller of the Exchequer, with regard to which he could not let the opportunity pass without observing, that there was an individual who had, on one occasion, stood forward to meet the call of the country; Lord Camden had resigned fees which he then received, to the amount of 23,115*l.* a-year. Where was the justification for any of these sinecure offices? Every device had been employed to establish offices of this kind, and to impose fees, so that those who had influence enough to get the offices created might enjoy the emoluments. In 1782 the Court fees had been regulated; but, he believed, fees to the amount of nearly 300,000*l.* remained; and if those fees had been abolished forthwith, what an amazing saving would have been made to the country. He had always desired to put an end to the existence of these fees, and he thought it was a reproach to any liberal Government that the country should now be paying 33,000*l.* in the army Estimates for paying our own money to our own troops. The objection was not the loss of the money alone, but the delay that was needlessly occasioned — many days were lost in attendance at offices to pay public money, and pass public accounts. In the Court of Chancery here there were several useless offices. There was one office held by Lord Bathurst, who received 1,610*l.* a-year; the Clerk of the Patents received 900*l.* a-year; the Clerk of the Pipe 968*l.* a-year. Then there was the Clerk of the Idiots — if there was such an office in the House of Commons, to punish them for allowing such a system, it would not be very objectionable—there was a Clerk of Idiots, an office held by Lord Thurlow, who received 963*l.*; and then there was the Secretary to the Bankruptcy office, who received 5,720*l.* a-year, an office also held by Lord Thurlow. Again, in the Chancery offices, there was an office held by Mr. Buller, who received, in fees, 793*l.* a-year; there were twenty-one Cursitors, all of whom performed their duties by deputy, and who received 6,404*l.* a-year; the Clerk of the Hanaper, an office held by two young ladies, the daughters of a noble Earl, who received 2,070*l.* a-year; the Messenger of the Great Seal, who received 994*l.*; and then there was Lord Ellenborough, the Chief Clerk of the Court of King's Bench, who received 7,905*l.*; then the office of *Custos Brevium* was held by Lord Kenyon, who received 4,986*l.*; and the officer of the Seal-office in the Common Pleas (the Duke of Grafton) received 2,286*l.* Now, the question for consideration was, whether the country was to continue to be oppressed and borne down by the payment of these and other enormous sinecures? The time would soon come when, upon an explanation of the finances and resources of the country, they would be called upon to reduce the number of poor industrious persons employed under Government—were they, he would ask, at the same time to continue this list of idle, and useless, and expensive pensioners? But he had not yet got through his list. The Chancery in Scotland was in a similar state. The Earl of Rosslyn held an office there, and received 1,712*l.* a-year; there was the Clerk of the Chancery, who held the office as trustee for the children of the noble Earl, and who received 925*l*; there was the Comptroller of Customs (Lord Leven), receiving 405*l.*; there was a Sir S. Grant, holding an office which brought him in 608*l.* a-year; Lord Frederick Campbell received 1,200*l.* a-year; and Lord Melville, as keeper of the Privy Seal, had 2,000*l.* a-year. Surely it was time that these matters were inquired into. He was of opinion that such a wasteful expenditure ought not to be tolerated one moment longer, and that at a time of such dreadful distress and suffering, not a shilling of the public money ought to be unnecessarily expended. One of the Resolutions of which he had given notice was, "That on all future vacancies of sinecure offices, or offices executed by deputy, in the naval, military, civil, and colonial service of the country, no new appointments shall be made, nor any salary, allowances, or emoluments granted." What he intended by this was to save the salary attached to useless offices; but where offices were of an honourable nature he had no objection that the office itself should remain, as was the case with the office of Admiral of Scotland, the salary of which had been abolished, but the right was preserved to the Crown of filling up the situation. A suggestion had however been made to him that it would be better to make his Motion more general, and to leave out the words "naval and military." He intended, therefore, to put it in this shape — "That on all future vacancies of sinecure offices, at home and abroad, no new appointment shall be made," &c. His second Resolution was, "that no person shall receive any salary, fee, or emolument for any office to which he shall hereafter be appointed, the duties of which are or shall be executed by deputy." The principle of that Resolution was adopted by the House, in 1822, as to the Receivers-General and their deputies, and a saving of 170,000*l.* a-year was effected. He therefore wished that the principle then acted upon should be applied to all offices, and that the public should pay no more for the discharge of the duties than their deputies were capable of doing them for.—The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving his first Resolution.

Lord *Althorp* said, that with respect to the substance of the Motion of the hon. Member, he had no objection to it. The principle indeed had not only been recognised in that House, but acted upon in a great many instances. Indeed in saying this, he must take the opportunity of observing, that several of the offices mentioned by the hon. Member as indicated in the Report made in 1816, had been entirely abolished since that time. He could not at this moment follow the hon. Member through all the instances to which he had referred, but he would mention one or two. He was surprised at the reference to the office held by Lord Thurlow in the Bankruptcy-office, for in the Bill of the year before last it had been abolished. It was nearly the same with the case of one of the offices quoted from the Courts in Scotland, the office said to be held by Lord F. Campbell. That nobleman had been dead for a great number of years. He hoped, therefore, that the House would not think that all the offices referred to by the hon. Member yet remained in existence. Some few indeed remained, but most of those were to be abolished at the death of the present holders. As to the second Resolution which the hon. Member had read, if it were confined to civil and colonial offices, he would make no objection to it; and, as his noble friend behind him (Lord Ebrington) had given notice of a motion for a Committee to inquire into military offices, the hon. Member had perhaps better not include them in his Motion, the more especially as he believed that the Committee would not be opposed by the Government. He should, indeed, suggest to his noble friend to add Naval Offices to those respecting which he was about to move for a Committee of Inquiry.

Mr. *Hume* said, that as the noble Lord had treated his proposition so very fairly, he should certainly adopt the suggestion now made of omitting naval and military officers from his Motion.

The Motion was then amended thus—"That in all future vacancies of sinecure offices in the Civil and Colonial Service of the country, no new appointment shall be made with any salary, fee, or emolument thereto attached."

Colonel *Davies* observed, that the very fair manner in which the noble Lord had met this Motion would tend most powerfully to restore and increase the confidence of the country in the present Government. He thought there was one point which had been overlooked by both parties, and that was, an Act of Parliament (the 22nd Geo. 3rd, c. 75), by which it was intended to prevent the future grant of any patent offices for any longer time than they should discharge the duties thereof in person. The preamble of the Act was this:—'Whereas, the practice of granting offices 'in his Majesty's colonies and plantations 'in America and the West Indies, to persons resident and intending to reside in 'Great Britain (in consequence whereof 'such offices are exercised by deputy, and 'have frequently been farmed out to the 'best bidder), hath been long complained 'of as a grievance by his Majesty's loyal 'subjects in those parts, who have been 'thereby exposed to exactions and oppressions, as well as to inconveniences arising 'from neglect of duty; may it please your 'Majesty that it be enacted—And be it 'enacted by the King's most excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent 'of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and 'Commons in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the 'same, that, from henceforth, no office 'to be exercised in any colony or plantation, now or at any time hereafter, belonging to the Crown of Great Britain, shall 'be granted or grantable by patent, for 'any longer time than during such time 'as the grantee thereof, or person appointed 'thereto, shall discharge the duty thereof 'in person, and behave well therein.' In the Act there was this clause:—'And be 'it further enacted, by the authority aforesaid, that if any person or persons holding 'such office shall be wilfully absent from 'the colony or plantation wherein the same 'is or ought to be exercised, without a 'reasonable cause to be allowed by the 'Governor and Council, for the time being, 'of such colony or plantation, or shall neglect the duty of such office, or otherwise 'misbehave therein, it shall and may be 'lawful for such Governor and Council to 'amove such person or persons from every 'or any such office; and in case any person 'or persons so amoved shall think himself 'aggrieved thereby, it shall and may be 'lawful to and for such person or persons 'to appeal therefrom, as in other cases of 'appeal, from such colony or plantation; 'whereon such a motion shall be finally 'judged of and determined by his Majesty 'in Council.' If such were the law, how happened it that so many persons were allowed to hold sinecure offices in the colonies without residence? How happened it that Mr. Percy Wyndham was in the possession of two offices in the West Indies, of the annual value of 4,600*l.*, from the period of 1763 to 1816, without having been compelled to reside in the West Indies, or to give up his places? Then, again, there was Mr. Sullivan, who received 1800*l.* a-year as Registrar and Secretary of Demerara, and was allowed to reside in England. Again, as to the case of Mr. Greville, Clerk of the Council at Tobago, with a salary of 400*l.* a-year, that gentleman did not reside in the colony; and yet no steps had been taken to abolish this office. There was also the case of my Lord Braybrooke, who was appointed to the office of Provost Marshal of Jamaica, with a salary of 2,100*l.*, when he was only six years of age; and who did not visit that colony until he had attained a very advanced period of life. Now, if the law he had quoted had been enforced, Lord Braybrooke would not have received one shilling until he went to Jamaica. Again, there was the case of Lord Chatham, as Governor of Gibraltar, who, though he never went near the place, received 3,400*l.* a-year. All these cases were contrary to the Act of Parliament, and yet no steps were taken to enforce it.

Lord *Althorp*, with reference to the observations of the gallant Colonel, remarked, that in the first case to which he had alluded—that of Mr. Wyndham—the appointment was made before the Act was passed, and therefore was not affected by it; in the next—that of Mr. Sullivan, at Demerara—the office had been abolished by the present Administration; and as to Mr. Greville, that gentleman had held two offices—one of these had the salary paid in London; the Government, acting on the principle referred to by the hon. member for Middlesex, and on that of the Act in question, had stopped the payment of the salary. It was true that the gentleman had been absent from the personal discharge of the duties of the other office, but then he was absent on leave regularly obtained.

Sir *Alexander Hope* expressed his satisfaction at the manner in which the Government had met this question. All that the army wanted was such honours and rewards for actual services as the country thought fit to bestow. The military profession asked for neither sinecures nor unmerited pensions. Indeed, the taunts which were sometimes thrown out against the army, charging them with plundering the people of their money and luxuriating in sinecures, were far more hurtful to the feelings of honourable men, who had spent their lives from their youths upwards in the arduous service of their country, than could be compensated by any emoluments, however large. In the army there were but few prizes, and to have those prizes tarnished made them worse than valueless. All that the army desired was a fair and just and honourable inquiry. If they were entitled to nothing, let them have nothing; but if, on the contrary, the country felt that the men who had spent their strength and risked their existence for the maintenance of its honour, the extension of its glory, and the security of its commerce, were entitled both to honour and to pecuniary reward, let it not be bestowed with taunt and contumely, but in a spirit which became a nation worthy of such services. The officers of the army wished not to be confounded with those, if such there were, who had distinction and public money for doing nothing. Better would it be for the army, rather than be so mixed up, to be deprived of all reward, whether honorary or other—better, far better, for the army to make any pecuniary sacrifices than to lose its name and its fame from being shown under false colours, and mingled with those who had neither worked for what they had got nor suffered for what they had received.

Captain *Yorke* observed, that the navy had no fear of inquiry, but was anxious to be placed in a fair position before the country, and to have its claims examined. He had no doubt that the noble Lord would deal fairly by the navy as well as by the army; but he was sure that if rewards were to be doled out by the House of Commons, they would be conferred in a more lavish and a more expensive manner to the country than if they were left in the hands of the Crown, for a popular assembly like that was more likely to be acted upon by strong feelings, whenever a case came before it well and eloquently represented. He wished the navy, in respect to sinecures, to be treated in the same way as the army.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. *Hume* then addressed the House with reference to Colonial appointments, most of which were served by deputy, and were thus sinecure offices. Besides this, no person in this country knew anything about even the vacancies in the Colonial Department till he heard of their being filled up, and most generally it turned out that the persons appointed were so totally unfit or unworthy, that, had sufficient time been allowed, by previous notice of the intended appointment, to consider its propriety, the appointment would infallibly have been negatived. It appeared to him (Mr. Hume), that the intended appointment ought to be gazetted, so that every opportunity might be given for examining into the claimant's efficiency. The hon. Member, after some further observations on the system of Colonial appointments, moved his second Resolution, "That no person should receive salary or emoluments from any place which he fills by deputy."

Lord *Sandon* confirmed the statement of the hon. member for Middlesex, as to the unfitness of many persons for the appointments which they received. Sir George Murray had stated, and from his connexion with a former Administration, he well knew, that many persons were sent out to Canada who were altogether unqualified for their situations. He hoped the suggestion of the hon. Member would be adopted.

Lord *Althorp* said, he should not object to the Motion. With regard to the suggestion of the hon. member for Middlesex, he would not pledge himself to its adoption, but he thought it worthy of consideration.

The Resolution agreed to.

Mr. *Hume* said, he wished to say a few words in explanation of the next Motion which he had to propose. The noble Lord opposite, had, on a former occasion, said, that as it was not delicate that his Majesty's Ministers should inquire into their own salaries and those of their colleagues, the duty should be delegated to a Committee, and that it should be the duty of Ministers to act with respect to the salaries as the Committee should suggest. Now, he wished to ask the noble Lord, whether there was any regulation by which all appointments should, in the same manner, be viewed as subject to qualification and alteration as to their duties and emoluments? If any such regulation had been adopted, his present Motion would have been unnecessary; but if not, he thought it was proper to mark the intention of the House to follow up the example which his Majesty's Ministers had shown with respect to their own salaries, and that individuals who held situations should hold them subject to such alterations as should be deemed expedient, as had been the case with respect to the Bishopric of Derry. He moved "That all offices filled up after this date, in any Department under the Crown, civil, military, naval, or colonial, shall be subject to such alterations as to duties, and to such deductions and alterations as to salary and emoluments, as his Majesty, by the advice of his Ministers shall make, without the persons so appointed having any claim for compensation or allowance for such alterations."

Lord *Althorp* objected to this Motion, because he considered it not only unnecessary, but as calling into question the existent powers of Government, who, as it was, had power to make every deduction and modification they thought advisable; and he himself had acted upon this power in several important instances. The hon. Member's suggestion assumed, that Government had not that power with respect to offices now in existence.

Mr. *Cutlar Fergusson* said, if the power was now existing it was unnecessary; and, if not, he objected to giving such an arbitrary new power to the House. It would be impossible to say to what extent it might be carried. In either case he hoped his hon. friend would withdraw his Motion.

Mr. *Hume* was happy to hear the statement of the noble Lord. He would just put one question to him, and if the answer were equally satisfactory, the Resolution should be readily withdrawn. This was with respect to the patent offices. Suppose one of the Judges was, by Act of Parliament, allowed a salary of 5,000*l.* a-year, would the noble Lord say, that this could be influenced other than by Act of Parliament? If the answer were in the affirmative, he would gladly withdraw his Motion, perfectly satisfied, with the hon. Member, that it would then be unnecessary.

Lord *Althorp* said, that the hon. Member must be aware the Judges' salaries were fixed by Act of Parliament.

Motion withdrawn.

TRIAL OF OFFENCES IN IRELAND.] Sir John Hobhouse moved the Order of the Day for the House resolving itself into Committee on the Trial of Offences (Ireland) Bill.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, that the discussion of the principle of this Bill had been postponed on the understanding that it should be taken on the question of going into Committee. He therefore hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would give his reasons for proposing this measure.

Sir *John Hobhouse* acknowledged that what the hon. and learned Gentleman said was true, and he should endeavour, however imperfectly, to assign reasons why this Bill should pass. The Government asked for this Bill on the same grounds as those which induced the House to pass the late

Coercion Bill as it had been called, but which he would call Pacification Bill, for it was a Bill to tranquillize Ireland. This was not a new measure, for a similar Act had passed in the reign of George 3rd, and the preamble and many of the clauses of the present were the same as in that Bill, He thought it was hardly necessary for him to enter into particulars, for the elaborate speech which had been made on the state of Ireland by his predecessor must have fully satisfied the House that justice could not be impartially administered in Ireland. Such a thing as a fair trial was probably unknown. The Bill, therefore, proceeded upon the impossibility of obtaining a competent and fair trial for offenders. He held in his hand a list of Jurors who had been deterred by intimidations from the discharge of their duty. One person connected with a newspaper received a notice that if he served as a Juror in the county of Kilkenny, and a single Whiteboy was punished in consequence of his verdict, he must prepare for death.

Mr. *O'Connell:* When was this notice served on the party?

Sir *John Hobhouse:* On March 19.

Mr. *O'Connell:* Do you go back to March, 1819, for cases?

Sir *John Hobhouse:* Certainly not. The case he referred to occurred on March 19, in the present year. He was not so ignorant of events that had lately happened, and of the hon. and learned Member's own exploits, as to refer back to so distant a period as the year 1819. He held in his hand a list of a variety of similar cases which he would mention if the House desired it. The right hon. Baronet accordingly proceeded to mention several other cases similar to those of which so many were quoted by Lord Althorp and Mr. Stanley, on introducing the Suppression of Disturbances Bill, for the purpose of showing the system of terror and intimidation which still prevailed in Ireland, and the effect of which was entirely to prevent the administration of justice in that country. He learned, by a communication he had received from Ireland, that the present plan of the Whitefeet was not to deter witnesses from coming forward, but to order them to attend at the Assizes for the purpose of giving such evidence as they (the Whitefeet) might think fit. He had also an affidavit to the effect that money had been collected for the purpose of obtaining the acquittal of persons charged with outrages, and that Mr. Maurice Reid, a Magistrate of Kilkenny, had received so many threatening letters that, in compliance with the wishes of his friends, he had left Ireland, and was now residing in England. In addition to these, it was a well-known fact that many Petty Jurors were under the necessity of carrying arms in self-defence. In Westmeath, thirty persons had been bailed by respectable persons, who had been forced to such a measure, in order to protect themselves against the attacks of the Whitefeet. The case was the same in Tipperary; but he was quite sure it was unnecessary to multiply instances. These were the circumstances which made it absolutely necessary to pass the present Bill, in which there was nothing to which any body, who had the substantial ends of justice at heart, could object. It was not proposed to give the power of changing the venue either to the prosecutor or defendant in any case, but to the Court before which the cause came to be tried; and there were certain clauses to be introduced for the purpose of providing for the payment of the expenses of those parties whose trials were removed to a distance from their own counties. If any further justification of the measure were wanted, he might mention that it had received the approbation of Lord Cloncurry, than whom Ireland did not boast a better patriot, nor ever a better friend.

Mr. *O'Connell* denied, that any case had been made out to justify such a Bill, and he would move that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee, in order to ascertain if it were necessary that it should be passed. After the change which had lately taken place in the Irish Secretaryship, he had hoped that he should not have any occasion to reply to personal attacks; but this expectation, he was sorry to say, had been disappointed. The right hon. Baronet had talked of his (Mr. O'Connell's) exploits. Now he begged to tell the right hon. Gentleman, that they had not been shifting and changeable, but consistent and of a uniform character. But dismissing this topic, he would ask the House whether there had ever been made such an attempt to trample on the constitutional rights of Ireland as had been ventured on that night? Were they prepared, on the strength of such documents as had been produced by the right hon. Secretary, on his simple allegation indeed to interrupt the usual course of justice in Ireland? If there had not been the utmost readiness on the part of the House to pass such a Bill, it would never have been introduced. Never before had such a measure been brought forward upon such grounds, or supported by such facts?

The right hon. Baronet talked of doing justice to the people of Ireland, and yet he took the Irish peasant from the place of his birth, and carried him to a place far distant from where alone he could procure evidence to his character and means of his defence, to be tried, and of course punished. The very fact of an application on the part of the Crown to change the venue was sufficient to prejudice any man's case. These Jurors would naturally say—this is one of the Whitefeet, who have terrified the Magistrates and Jurors of his native country; but we will show him that we are not to be so intimidated. He had had more experience in criminal cases than almost any man in Ireland, and he could assert, that from many difficulties in procuring witnesses, a man's fate depended more upon his character than upon anything else. This was often owing to the conduct of the Counsel on the part of the Crown, and yet this Bill would remove an accused person from the only place where he could establish his character. One of the clauses to be introduced, it was true, provided for the payment of the expenses of a prisoner's witnesses, and he should therefore say no more upon this part of the subject at present, but he would assert again, that no grounds whatever existed for passing the Bill. He defied the right hon. Baronet to bring forward a single instance where the course of justice had been impeded by injuring Jurymen. The Report of the Committee of 1832, of which Sir Henry Parnell had been Chairman, had set forth that no Juryman, up to August in that year, had ever received any notice whatever. He (Mr. O'Connell) would go further, and say, that in the prosecution of the Whitefeet, forty-eight out of forty-nine had been convicted, and in every instance the Jurymen had returned to their places of residence without any interruption or molestation whatever. There was no reason for making such an inroad on the Constitution of Ireland. In the years 1766 and 1776, Jurors had been injured, and outrages had been committed; but nothing of this sort had occurred recently, and therefore the Bill was totally uncalled for. The right hon. Secretary had referred to a similar Bill which had formerly passed; but was he aware that the Act to which he alluded, and which was directed against the north of Ireland; was a complete failure? The Government even shrunk from carrying it into effect; but it was a bad precedent, worthy to be followed on the present occasion! All he asked for was, that a Select Committee should be appointed, with a few friends of Ireland among its members, and he would answer for it that they would prove that no necessity existed for the Bill. He begged Ministers to reflect upon the effects which their treatment of Ireland had upon their foreign policy. For the sake of Poland they dared not interfere, for Russia would point out to them the state of Ireland. They dared not quarrel with France until they had conciliated Ireland. He warned them, as he had frequently done before, unfortunately without effect but not without the results which he had predicted having arrived, that the measure would have the most fatal effects on the feelings of the Irish people. The hon. and learned member concluded by moving his Amendment.

The *Solicitor General* had no hesitation in opposing the Amendment of the hon. and learned member for Dublin. What was it which the hon. Member had so much reprobated? It might be supposed that it was the most tyrannical code ever proposed for enslaving an unfortunate people. From the learned Gentleman's observations, one would really imagine, that it was proposed that the inhabitants of Ireland should be shipped off and tried in some remote corner of the globe. But what did the Bill amount to? To this, and this only:—that if it should appear to the satisfaction of the Judges of the Court of King's Bench in Ireland, the regular constitutional tribunal of the country, that there could not be a fair trial in the county in which an offence was committed, they might direct the trial to take place in the next adjoining county, or in the city of Dublin. Application for the removal of the trial might be made either by the accused, or the prosecutor; and every expense incurred by the prisoner, in the conveyance of his witnesses to the place appointed by the Court, would be paid. It seemed to him, then, that this Bill, so far from prejudging the case of a prisoner, tended only to give him a fair and impartial trial; and for that reason he should give it his decided support. The Bill which lately passed the House he felt himself compelled to support, most reluctantly, because it went, in certain cases, to supersede the Trial by Jury, and to establish unconstitutional tribunals. But the present Bill would tend to make those unconstitutional tribunals unnecessary, and would continue the Trial by Jury, according to the ancient law of the kingdom. The hon. and learned member for Dublin told the House, that, if this Bill passed, England would not dare to go to war with France, because Ireland, as he insinuated, would immediately join with the latter, and throw off its allegiance to the British Crown. And why was Ireland to do that? Because the British Legislature proposed that, if there were not a possibility of procuring a fair trial in a county in which an offence took place, the trial should be transferred to the next county, or to the city of Dublin! The hon. and learned Member contended that there could be no freedom in a country where such a system was allowed to exist. He thought Scotland, where he was born, was free; and yet, the hon. and learned Member must know that this system existed, and had been the law of Scotland for many ages. In every case, at the discretion of the public prosecutor in that country, the trial of an offence might be removed from the place in which it was committed to the city of Edinburgh; and in the whole course of his life he never heard a complaint whispered against the power so exercised. But this was not only the law of Scotland, but the law of England also; because, wherever it was apprehended that a fair trial could not be had in the county in which an offence had taken place, the trial, on the application of either of the parties concerned, to the Court of King's Bench, might be removed to another county. But if the hon. and learned Gentleman be dissatisfied with his authority, he would give him that of Blackstone, who said, that "as the jurisdiction of the King's Court is co-extensive with the kingdom, there surely, can be no impropriety in departing from the common rule, when the great ends of justice require it." In addition to this, Lord Mansfield said, "that where an impartial trial cannot be had in the county in which an offence has taken place, the case shall be tried in the next county. This is the ancient and general rule, wherever the Court has jurisdiction." So that it appeared by the testimony of these two weighty legal authorities, that that which the hon. and learned Member represented as most unconstitutional; and as so despotic and tyrannical, as to warrant the people of Ireland in throwing off the allegiance of the British Crown; was the ancient and general rule of England, and had always been the law of Scotland. Within his own experience, he had known many instances in which the Court of King's Bench had changed the venue upon its being shown that a fair trial could not be had in the place in which the offence was committed. He remembered particularly a case which was tried at Gloucester for an offence committed at Stafford. In that case, the application for the change of venue was made on the part of the defendant, and, he as counsel for the prosecution, opposed it. As it was proved, however, to the satisfaction of the Judges of the King's Bench, that a prejudice existed against the defendant in his native town, they directed the trial to take place at Gloucester. Again, there was the recent case of the Magistrates of Bristol, whose trial took place in Westminster Hall before a Jury brought from the county of Berks. The case of the "King *v.* Thomas" was, perhaps, more in point than any that he had cited. The city of Rochester was a county by itself, having a separate jurisdiction from the county of Kent. A bill of indictment was found againt Thomas, an excise officer, for murder within the liberties of the city of Rochester. In the common course of law, the trial would have taken place there; but, upon an application on the part of the prisoner to the Court of King's Bench, the trial was ordered to be removed to the county of Kent. The venue was changed accordingly; the trial took place at Maidstone, and the prisoner was acquitted. Such a prejudice existed against him in the city of Rochester, that, had he been tried there, the probability was, that he would have been convicted. This showed, that where a prejudice was known to exist, or where warm feelings were excited, it was as much to the benefit of the prisoner as of the prosecutor, that the venue should be changed. He trusted, therefore, that the hon. and learned member for Dublin would not tell the people of Ireland that this was a Bill which carried with it so great an infraction of the common and recognized laws of the United Kingdom as to justify them in shaking off their allegiance to England. In point of fact, when this Bill should become law, Ireland would only be placed in the same situation, as regarded the liability to change of venue, as England and Scotland now were, and for many ages had been. If the Trial by Jury in the ordinary form of law could be continued with any hope or any probability of obtaining justice between the accuser and the accused in Ireland, the late Act which, in many instances, provided for the establishment of Courts-martial in lieu of any form of Trial by Jury, would never have been agreed to by so large a majority of the House. The statement of the right hon.

Secretary to-night proved that the system of intimidation still prevailed, and, therefore, he was at a loss to conceive upon what grounds, or upon what principle, the hon. and learned Member objected to a Bill, which would extend, as far as possible, to the people of Ireland, the benefit of the Trial by Jury, instead of subjecting them to the more summary and severe process of a Court-martial. The hon. and learned Member had before referred to the proposition made during the American war, to bring culprits to trial from America to England; but what parallel was there between the two cases? The operation of this Bill was confined to the jurisdiction of the courts in Ireland. The hon. and learned Gentleman had complained of the hardship of trying a man before strangers; but were the inhabitants of Dublin strangers? Were they foreigners? Were they not Irishmen, and had they not the sympathies of Irishmen? This must be so, and he was sure the hon. and learned Member did his constituents injustice. He would only remind the hon. and learned member for Dublin, before he sat down, that many Irish Members who opposed the Suppression of Disturbances Bill, supported this Bill. The hon. and learned member for Monaghan, for instance, highly approved of it, and considered that it might have an excellent effect, and render it altogether unnecessary to call into operation the powers of the Coercive Bill; for even when a district was disturbed, it did not necessarily follow that Courts-martial shall be established.

Mr. *Cutlar Fergusson* said, he knew of no case in which the venue was changed except at the desire of the prisoner. There was no instance of its being changed on the part of the Crown. He regretted that the Court-martial clause had passed at all. Such a Bill as this might have rendered it quite unnecessary. He was prepared to oppose the changing of the venue to the city of Dublin, on account of the manner in which Juries were appointed.

The *Solicitor General* said, he had no doubt that upon application the venue would be changed at the desire of the prosecutor.

Sir *James Scarlett* said, there was a statute which enabled the prosecutor to have a trial in the next county.

Mr. *Jervis* said, he did not mean to oppose the Bill. He believed there was no instance of the venue being changed in cases of felony at the suggestion of the prosecutor. At the same time, he did not mean to say, that a power to do that should not be given to the prosecutor in Ireland, subject to the approbation of the Court of King's Bench.

Mr. *Aglionby* supported the Bill. He might be disposed in the Committee to vote against the venue being changed to the city of Dublin.

Mr. *Sinclair* supported the Bill. He was a friend to Ireland, and as much disposed as any man to maintain her liberties. He heard nothing which could induce him to vote against the Bill.

Mr. *Maurice O'Connell* said, that for three hundred years this parrot cry of friendship to slaves was repeated in the West Indies, as it was now with respect to Ireland. Such professions of friendship were nothing but slang and cant. The friendship of England to Ireland had invariably shown itself in coercion. Not a single case of intimidation had been produced to justify this Bill, except one, founded upon anonymous information. He admitted that as fair and impartial a Jury might be had in Dublin as in any part of the empire if the Juries were struck in a different manner.

Sir *Robert Inglis* thought it quite improper in the member for Tralee to charge his hon. friend (Mr. Sinclair) with the use of cant and slang. He protested against the use of such language in that House.

Mr. *Maurice O'Connell* spoke generally of professions, which he must consider, looking into the result as hypocritical; and he meant nothing personally offensive to the member for Caithness.

Mr. *Sinclair* expressed himself satisfied with the explanation.

Mr. *O'Dwyer* opposed the Bill, and expressed his astonishment at a proposition to subject all Ireland to Dublin Juries. The Jury system there was full of vices. An instance in point was this: an Alderman was using insulting language to the King, and, on being remonstrated with, replied, "you may prosecute me if you like, but if it was even for treason, I am sure of getting a Jury to acquit me." Indeed, when it happened that the Attorney General had a quarrel with the Corporation he could get no conviction whatever.

Mr. *Hill* thought the last speaker had given an undeniable reason for passing the Bill, for if it were a law, and an Alderman should speak treason, or the Attorney General have a quarrel with the Corporation, the venue might be changed, and the Alderman might find the experiment hazardous, and the Corporation might find it dangerous to obstruct the course of the law. His object, however, in rising, was to express the feelings he entertained at hearing the hon. and learned member for Dublin, and those who supported him, constantly throwing out irritating expressions against English Members; who, whatever might be said of their justice, certainly deserved great credit for their patience. He would put the claims of English Members as low as they could be put, by the ingenuity—he did not say ingenuousness—of the hon. and learned member for Dublin, he would suppose that if anything were to be gained, that if one single sixpence were to be put into the pockets of English Members by oppressing Ireland, they would so act, But if they could have no such motive, what was meant by the charge against them? The hon. and learned member for Tralee had compared them to negro slaveholders; but he would beg the House to recollect that there was this material difference between the relation of England to Ireland, and of masters to their slaves. Negroes were the property of their masters, and worked for their benefit; the masters gained their livelihood from the sweat of the negroes' brow; but it would puzzle hon. Members from Ireland to show how English Members profited by the labour of the people of Ireland. He would claim nothing for English generosity, which, in the abstract, the hon. and learned member for Dublin praised every night, but which he never allowed in any particular instance; but he would simply put the question as one of interest—and ask the hon. and learned Member, what benefit English Members could derive from the oppression of Ireland, any more than from the oppression of Scotland, of Wales, or Cornwall? What motive did he imagine could actuate the English Members? Did they do evil for the sake of evil? Were they demons? The hon. and learned Member was continually alluding to times past, and he went with him in those allusions. He knew that Ireland had been oppressed, that even his eloquence was not fervid enough to describe the oppression Ireland had met with—not, however, from England, or the English people—but from the English Government; but had not that Government oppressed England also? [Mr. *Connell:* No!] Had the hon. and learned Member then expended all his faculties upon Irish history, and not read a page of English history? Were the Members of a Reformed Parliament, to say, that in times past, the English people had not been oppressed. Had the Government of the people of England always been just, and had they not suffered from the same causes as the people of Ireland? Had the people of England been duly represented in Parliament? Had they had a proper control over their own revenue and expenditure? Had not the people of England been subject to the domination of the faction which laid an equal hand of tyranny upon both countries? The hon. and learned Gentleman objected to this Bill as imposing hardships upon Ireland which did not exist in England; but the principle of the Bill had long been received and acted upon in England. The Act which had introduced it, gave power to any prosecutor on his own mere Motion, without asking the leave of any court whatever to prosecute a criminal in any adjoining county to the local jurisdiction in which the offence was committed; and it was only the year before last, that a murder committed in the county of the city of Coventry was prosecuted in the county of Warwick. The murderer was convicted, and taken back to the county of the city of Coventry to be executed. An important measure like this, however, ought not to be defended on mere law precedents; but when the hon. and learned Member spoke of this as an innovation, he certainly forgot his learning. If the hon. Member attacked the Bill upon principle, he would meet him upon principle, and would say boldly, that the principle of the Bill was so good, that he, for one, supposing it ever to be wanted, should, with proper checks, be just as ready to extend it to England as to Ireland. Nay, he thought it would tend to the advancement of justice, if a Bill of this kind was introduced into England. He was willing indeed, to concede, that, upon the evidence which the right hon. Gentleman had brought before the House, he could not conscientiously vote for the Bill. But he believed it to be good in principle, and should be ready to vote for it if the right hon. Gentleman had not produced any evidence whatever. Juries appeared originally to have been not only Judges but witnesses, and were, therefore, obtained from the very place where the offence was committed. What they gained in knowledge by dwelling in the vicinage, they lost however, in impartiality; and, therefore, a very ancient change was, to bring the Juries from the hundred at large, and not from the immediate vicinity of the place where the offence was committed. A subsequent change was, to bring the Jury from any part of the county; which was the state of the law now. Did the hon. and learned Gentleman mean to say, that generally speaking, Juries drawn from a county knew anything of the witnesses or character of the parties accused? Such things occasionally happened, but they were by no means favourable to an impartial decision. Generally speaking, county Juries knew as little of the parties they tried, as if they lived a hundred miles off. What did it matter, then, whether a man were tried in his own county, or in a county at a considerable distance? When a Jury was ignorant of the criminal and the witnesses, it mattered not whether the trial took place in their own county or 200 miles off. The only difference was, that the prisoner would have the public to pay the expense of his witnesses when he was taken out of the county. That was an advantage all accused persons, he trusted, would shortly have, under proper checks, both in England and Ireland; for there was often great failure of justice from the incompetency of accused persons to bring from a distance witnesses who could prove their innocence. That advantage was given by this Bill, and therefore it ought to be received as a boon, instead of being made the subject of another charge against the English Parliament. With respect to Dublin Juries, as it had been proved, that the Sheriffs of Dublin were partisans, he should refuse his assent to that part of the Bill which went to place in their hands the power of appointing the Juries who were to try parties under this Bill. He saw no reason why a clause should not be put into the Bill, taking from the Sheriff of Dublin the power of choosing Juries, at least for the purposes of the Act. Surely, the officers of the Court of King's Bench might be intrusted with the power of selecting Juries. [Mr. *O'Connell:* The abuse was in making up the panel.] Well, they might make up the panel also; and at any rate Dublin could not be so deficient in honest men, as that one man could not be found in whom this power might be placed, even to the satisfaction of the hon. and learned member for Dublin himself. He should certainly support the Bill, but not the particular clause of it to which he had just referred.

Amendment withdrawn, and the House went into Committee.—Several clauses were agreed to.

Mr. *Fitzgerald* moved an Amendment, the object of which was to limit the power of the Executive Government in Ireland to the mere change of the venue to the adjoining county, and that to permit its removal, as was proposed in the Bill, to the county of the city of Dublin. For that purpose he proposed to leave out the words "or to the county of the city of Dublin, or to the county of Dublin."

The Committee divided on the Amendment.—Ayes 19; Noes 84: Majority 65.

Bill went through Committee. The House resumed.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, April 19, 1833.

MINUTES.] Petitions presented. By the Duke of RICHMOND, by the Marquess of LANSDOWN, and by the Marquess of BUTE, and the Earls RADNOR WINCHILSEA, and Lords POLTIMORE and BARHAM, from several Places,—for the Abolition of Slavery.—By the Earl of WINCHILSEA, from Bainbridge, for the Abolition of the Punishment of Death in certain cases; and from Canterbury, for the Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By Lord ROLLE, by the Bishop of LONDON, by the Earl of RODEN, and by the Marquess of LANSDOWN, from several Places,—to the same effect.—By the Earl of RODEN, from Beaulieu, against the Irish Church Bill; and from Hamilton, against the existing System of Church Patronage in Scotland.—By Lord WYNFORD, from Peckham, for giving Freeholders the power of appointing Auditors of Poor and other Parochial Rates.

CRIMINAL LAW.] Lord *Lyndhurst* rose to put a question to the noble Viscount on a subject connected with the administration of the Criminal Laws. By the Act of Parliament passed in the course of last Session, all persons convicted of cattle or sheep stealing, or stealing in a dwelling-house to the amount of *5l.* should be sentenced to transportation for life. Now, he was extremely desirous of knowing whether the sentences under that Act had been in all cases carried into effect, or commuted for minor punishments. One reason for his wishing to ascertain this was the fact of his having been lately engaged in the trial of several cases of the kind he referred to, and it had constantly appeared to him that the sentence of transportation for life was in many of those cases extremely harsh, and much beyond the nature of the offence. He could state a variety of instances in which that sentence would appear monstrous. He recollected one in which a poor cottager in a mountainous district of the country was indicted for stealing a lamb. He was the owner of two or three sheep, and one of the mothers happened to drop a lamb which died. The cottager finding a few days after a lamb, which had strayed from his neighbour's flock into a field belonging to him, seized upon it and appropriated it as his own, treating it in every respect as the one he had lost. The man was tried and found guilty of the offence, and he (Lord Lyndhurst), who sat as judge, was obliged in pursuance of the Act to pass the extreme sentence upon him. Under the circumstances of that case, he certainly thought the sentence much more severe than justice required; but he had no power to mitigate the sentence. It would be far better, he thought, if some other description of punishment—for instance, a slight imprisonment—were allowed to be substituted in cases of mitigated atrocity. He had felt it his duty to communicate the circumstances of the case he had stated to the Government when they occurred. Surely the atrocity of the offence was very different in the case of a person who thus carried away one lamb, and in that of another who stole a whole flock of sheep. There was, indeed, no parallel between the two offences, and yet they were both to be visited with a punishment of equal severity. He could only say, that if the extreme punishment were inflicted in all cases, then a new and distinct classification of crimes, so as to include every variety of case, would become indispensably necessary to the due administration of justice. A noble Earl, whom he did not then see in his place, had said, during a previous discussion on this subject, that no difference in the power to mitigate the sentence had been made by the Act in question. This, though correct in expression, was not correct in substance. Under the old system the Judge had the power of stating in the margin of the calendar the punishment to which the prisoner was to be subjected. This power was vested in the Judge practically, but such was not the case under the present system, The sentence which the Judge was compelled to pass was transportation for life, nor had he the least power to mitigate it. Another reason which had induced him to apply for information on the subject was this—that he had ground to believe some further alteration was intended to be introduced into the criminal laws by the other House of Parliament. He wished, then, while those alterations were in progress. that his Majesty's Ministers would turn their attention to this point—namely, the affixing of one precise penalty to every case of crime, and that penalty to be enforced imperatively. To effect this object it would be necessary to make some extensive alterations in the definition of crimes. In the cases of house-breaking, he could notice the same anomaly as he had pointed out in those of sheep-stealing. When a thief entered an empty house, and, using it as a means of communication with another house, stole therefrom property to an immense amount, that offence appeared to him most flagitious, and one which called for the extreme penalty of the law. But in the case of a poor wretch driven by hunger, lifting a latch for the purpose of stealing a loaf of bread, and then running away, (a case of continual occurrence) it seemed harsh and absurd to inflict an equal degree of punishment. But yet for every offence of house-breaking the Judge was compelled to pass a sentence of transportation for life. He was, for these reasons, desirous of knowing from the noble Viscount whether under the new law the sentences for the offences he had mentioned had in every instance been carried into effect.

Viscount *Melbourne*, in answer to the noble and learned Lord's question, could not give a precise answer; but he understood that the sentences had not in every case been carried into effect. The circumstances of the several cases were, he believed, always taken into consideration, and the punishment which was considered most apportioned to the offence was substituted in its stead. With respect to the particular case of sheep-stealing alluded to by the noble and learned Lord, he was not prepared to say what punishment was inflicted. He neither recollected the case nor the communication which the noble and learned Lord said he had made to the Government, but in all probability a mitigation of the punishment had taken place. He had supported the Bill for the mitigation of criminal punishments upon the general principle of rendering them more certain, though less severe. The current of public feeling ran strongly against the old laws, and there was in consequence a great repugnance in Jurors to convict. An alteration in the law, then, became necessary, and it was thought the best alternative to limit the punishment for certain offences to transportation for life, instead of inflicting the penalty of death. It was perfectly clear that by the application of a general rule to those offences a great deal of inconvenience might be avoided; but it was not in the nature of human affairs that any general enactment should be free from some inconvenience. Certainly, if there could be a more complete and comprehensive classification and a more accurate definition of crime, it would be a great advantage to the administration of justice. The Government would always be happy to avail itself of any communication from the noble and learned Lord which would assist the attainment of those objects in the smallest degree. The present was, he conceived, the proper period for doing so, when a bill on the subject was about to be discussed in the other House of Parliament.

Lord *Wynford* said, that the principle alluded to by the noble Viscount who had just sat down—the rendering punishments more certain, by diminishing their severity—was precisely the principle on which he had made the proposition to the House. He admitted that a better classification of crimes might be effected.

Lord *Lyndhurst* assured the noble Viscount (Lord Melbourne) that whenever he should happen to sit as Judge before a Jury who had never acted under the new law, he should consider himself bound in passing sentence to state to them the law of the case; and to point out to their notice the fact that he was not allowed to mitigate the sentence. A great practical alteration had, it could not be denied, been effected with respect to the power of the Judge. Until the Act in question passed, the Judge might mitigate the sentence as he thought proper, by merely stating the punishment on the margin of the calendar, and this without being obliged to assign any reason for the mitigation. The case was not so now; that part of the Judge's power was taken away; and if on any occasion he wished to effect a mitigation of the punishment, a special application was necessary. But it was not always convenient to make these special applications from want of time. During the last Assizes he himself had tried 400 or 500 cases, and how could it be supposed that he should have time to make special applications? In order to obtain the information he wanted he should move for "a return of the number of convictions for horse, cattle, and sheep-stealing, and for stealing to the amount of *5l.* in a dwelling-house, stating in how many of such convictions the punishment of transportation for life had been inflicted, and in how many that sentence had been commuted for different punishments, from the 1st of July, 1832, to the present time."

Lord *Dacre* said, that his object in originating the measure, which had been amended on the Motion of the noble Baron, was to substitute certainty for uncertainty in the punishment of crime, and he believed that he acted in consonance with the feelings of the majority of the people in so doing. He could not, therefore, help expressing his surprise at hearing the noble and learned Lord assert that hereafter, when he should have to charge a Jury in cases under the Act, he should make a statement to them which would have the effect of exciting their feelings and influencing their judgment before the Jury had come to a dispassionate —

Lord *Lyndhurst* declared that he had made no such statement as was attributed to him by the noble Lord. He distinctly said, that after the verdict should be passed, he would, in the presence of the Jury, if they for the first time had sat on a case included within the scope of the Act, state that in passing the sentence he was guilty of no harshness, but was compelled to pass it by the provisions of the Act.

Lord *Dacre* said, that if he were wrong, he would apologize; but he certainly so understood the noble and learned Lord.

Lord *Lyndhurst* again assured the noble Lord that he was mistaken.

Lord Dacre again began to address the House, but was again interrupted by an explanation from Lord Lyndhurst, amidst loud cries of "Order," when

The Marquis of *Lansdown* rose to order. His noble friend had been thrice interrupted by the noble and learned Lord, and he submitted that such conduct was not ordinary.

The Earl of *Wicklow* believed that the ordinary course was, when a noble Lord disclaimed the use of expressions which were attributed to him, to consider them as not having been spoken by him. He was very much surprised at the noble Baron's attempt to persevere on the present occasion.

Lord *Dacre* observed, that he never intended to repeat the statement which the noble and learned Lord had disclaimed; he was merely about to say, when he was interrupted, that such was the impression on his mind from what had fallen from the noble and learned Lord.

Lord *Lyndhurst* assured the House that he never could by any possibility have so expressed himself, because in so doing he should be advocating a violation of the duty of a Judge.

Motion agreed to.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, April 19, 1833.

Minutes.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of Colonel Davies, an Account of all the Gaols in England and Wales, and the Number of Persons Confined in them. —On the Motion of Mr. Hume, an Account of all Persons now entitled to a Pension under the Acts 57th George 3rd, cap. 65; and 6th George 4th, cap. 90.—On the Motion of Mr. Briscoe, an Account from the Court of King's Bench, of the Number of Persons Confined in the Marshalsea of that Court to whom Day Rules have been granted to leave the Prison in Term Time, from 1805, till 1832, inclusive.—On the Motion of the Solicitor General, a Copy of the Fourth Report of the Commissioners appointed to Inquire into the Law of England respecting Real Property.—On the Motion of Mr. Jones, Accounts of the Manufacture, Consumption, and Exportation and Importation of Proof Spirits, from the 5th January, 1832, to the 5th April, 1833.

Bills. Read a first time:—Jewish Disabilities Repeal.—Read a second time:—Heirs of Entail; Tailzies Act Amendment; Future Entail (Scotland).—Read a third time:—Public Revenue (Scotland).

Petitions presented. By Lord A. Chichester, from Belfast, for a Modified System of Poor Laws for Ireland.—By Mr. R. Oswald, from the Political Union and others of Kilmarnock, for the Abolition of the Laws of Entail and Primogeniture.—By Mr. Hutt, from Hull, for Vote by Ballot, the Repeal of the Septennial Act, and of the Assessed Taxes.—By Mr. Bowes, from Stockton-upon-Tees, for the Discontinuance of Nocturnal Legislation.—By Sir Charles Lemon, from Penzance, in favour of the Church of Ireland Bill.—By Mr. Abercrombie, from the Medical Students of Edinburgh, for the Amendment of the Apothecaries Act.—By Mr. William Whitmore, from Bilston, for Amending the Law relating to Ejectment. —By Mr. Robert Ferguson, from Burntisland; and Mr. Abercrombie, from Edinburgh,—for a Repeal of the Duty on Stamped Receipts.—By Mr. R. Steuart, from Haddington, for Amendment in the Law of Scotland; and from the same Place; and by Sir A. Agnew, from Sorby, —for a Better System of Church Patronage (Scotland).—By Sir George Grey, from Devonport, and Mr. Abercrombie, from Stonehouse, for Emancipating the Jews.—By Sir George Grey, from Stoke Damerel; and by Mr. Welby, from Grantham, against the Assessed Taxes.—By Lord R. Grosvenor, Mr. R. Palmer, Mr. Buller, Mr. Cartwright, Mr. J. W. Scott, and Mr. Buckingham, from several Places,—against the Sale of Beer Act.—By Sir William Folkes, Mr. Buckingham, and Mr. H. Handley, from several Places,—for Relief from Taxation.—By Mr. Jervis, from Worcester, for Liberty to Elect their Municipal and Local Authorities.—By Sir G. Grey, from Devonport, and by Serjeant Spankie, from Islington, in favour of a Factories Regulation Bill.—By Captain G. Ferguson, Mr. R. Shawe, Sir Gilbert Heathcote, Lord G. Somerset, and Mr. R. Palmer, from many Places,—against the Malt Tax.—By Sir T. Lennard, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Buckingham, Major Keppel, Mr. Tower, Sir Francis Blake, Mr. C. Kemyss Tynte, Mr. J. Kemyss Tynte, Mr. Tyrell, Mr. R. Shawe, Mr. Bewes, Sir G. Staunton, Sir Eardley Wilmot, Lord Viscount Molyneux, Mr. J. Gaskell, Sir Gilbert Heathcote, Sir W. Folkes, Sir G. Grey, Mr. Tancred, Sir J. Johnstone, Mr. H. Stanley, Mr. Fysche Palmer, Sir W. Ingilby, Mr. Addams Williams, Mr. Robert Steuart, Mr. Craven Berkeley, Mr. Roper, Sir C. Lemon, Mr. Ruddell Todd, Captain Lewis Fenton, Mr. E. J. Stanley, Mr. Throckmorton, Mr. Brigstock, Mr. N. Calvert, Mr. Aglionby, Lord Arthur Chichester, Mr. Cartwright, Sir Oswald Moseley, Mr. Methuen, Mr. Morison, Lord Granville Somerset, and Colonel Davies, from a Number of Places,—against Slavery.—By Major Keppel and Mr. R. Shawe, from several Places,—against the Duty on Taxed Carts.—By Mr. Warburton, Colonel Maberly, Mr. Welby, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Tyrell, Mr. H. Handley, Lord R. Grosvenor, Lord Viscount Molyneux, Mr. Mills Gaskell, Sir Gilbert Heathcote, Mr. H. Stanley, Mr. R. Ferguson, Mr. Brigstock, Sir Andrew Agnew, Mr. R. Palmer, Lord Arthur Chichester, Mr. Williams Wynn, and Mr. Methuen, from a great Number of Places,—for a Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By Mr. Wilbraham, Mr. Buckingham, and Lord Molyneux, from several Places,—for Relieving Dissenters from the Civil Disabilities under which they labour.—By Mr. Buckingham, from Harwood and other Places, against the Disturbances (Ireland) Bill.

Patronage of the Church (Wales).] Mr. *Wilbraham* presented a petition from Llangellan, and other parishes in the county of Merioneth, to which he wished to draw the attention of the House, because it went, in some measure, to contradict a statement made some time ago by a right reverend Prelate in another place. The petition complained that the most valuable livings were in the hands of non-residents, who while they pocketed from 150*l.* and upwards, only allowed the resident curates 10*l.* They complained likewise that most of the clergymen of the Established Church were generally ignorant of the Welch language, and that they consequently had to address the people in a language which they did not understand at all, or at least which they understood very imperfectly. The petitioners prayed for a reform in the enactment of tithes, and generally, for a reform in the Church Establishment.

Sir *Watkin Williams Wynn* said, that as to the Incumbents he knew that in the parishes with which he was acquainted the clergy now all understood the Welch language, and he did not believe that any of them were entirely ignorant of the Welch language, notwithstanding the many complaints that had been made of them.

Mr. *Jervis* was free to admit, that there was one great cause of complaint affecting the Welch Church, and which, he regretted to say, was equally applicable to the Church throughout this kingdom—namely, absenteeism and plurality of livings. There was one complaint, however, peculiarly applicable to the Welch Church, which he could not but think must be founded in justice—the want of knowledge of the Welch language in the clergy, which ought, undoubtedly, to be removed. He thought that to this cause was to be attributed the number of dissenters to be found in Wales. The dissenting churches in that Principality were actually as two to one of the Established Churches.

Sir *Watkin Williams Wynn* agreed to

the necessity of having clergymen educated in the Welch language. He could only say there were respectable and most learned men among the Welch clergy. He would add that in the part of Wales where he possessed property the clergyman who had been appointed by the Bishop of Bangor, was equally celebrated for his piety and for a complete knowledge of the Welch language.

Mr. *Wilbraham* said, it was impossible for him, from his own personal information, to say whether these complaints were well-founded or not; but he saw most respectable names to this petition, and among them were the names of several of the clergy themselves, as well as that of Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, and so on.

Lord *Robert Grosvenor* presented a similar petition from the inhabitants of Newtown, Montgomeryshire. The noble Lord said, that many remarks had been made in another place upon the observations he had felt it his duty to submit to the House when he presented a petition with a similar prayer to the present from a numerous body of his constituents; but he was sure the House would do him the justice to remember that on the occasion to which he referred he had made no personal allusion to any individual with reference to the Church Establishment in Wales. What he had then said (and he now repeated it) was, that the petitioners complained that the ecclesiastical appointments were generally conferred on individuals who were unacquainted with Wales, and many of whom were non-resident in that country, having benefices elsewhere. He made no charge against any individual, but against the system generally. He wished to add, that the appointments made by the Bishop of St. Asaph had been most proper appointments, and he was happy to hear that those of the Bishop of Bangor had given equal satisfaction.

Mr. *Jervis* supported the petition for Welch Church Reform, but was convinced that no imputation could be cast upon either of the right reverend Prelates named by his noble colleague.

SUPPLY.—PUBLIC BUSINESS.] Lord *Althorp*, before moving the Order of the Day for the House going into a Committee of Supply, wished to ask the hon. member opposite (Mr. Matthias Attwood) if he intended to persist in bringing forward his motion set down for that day? He thought that so important a motion ought not to come before the House merely by way of Amendment, but as a substantive motion. And therefore, if that hon Member persisted, he would not move the Order of the Day, but he trusted that the hon. Member would give way, and put off his motion till Monday.

Mr. *Matthias Attwood* said, it would appear from all he had heard on the subject, as if it would be impossible that his Motion should be brought forward to-night without the greatest disadvantage and inconvenience being incurred and without exciting feelings that, if he persevered in the Motion, it would be calculated to embarrass the Government. For the purpose of at once freeing himself from an imputation which he felt he did not deserve, he should state in the outset that he was willing to postpone his motion. At the same time he felt bound to state, that it was not above a fortnight since the subject had been mentioned with a view to fixing the period for its introduction to the House, and he had heard nothing of public business interfering with his motion of to-night until yesterday, and then it appeared, according to the statement made to him, that Ministers wanted this evening for purposes connected with supply, which, unless they could carry into effect, the greatest possible inconvenience and disadvantage would be occasioned to the public service; and indeed the matter had been stated to him so strongly as almost to induce him to think that scarcely could the public payments be made if to-night were refused the Ministers for supply. Now, however, he found that the noble Lord proposed not that the House should give up the night to supply, but to the consideration of the Budget. He asked the noble Lord, if he ever knew of such a motion as that which he now proposed, to make being brought on after one night's notice, to the interruption of a proposition long fixed for discussion? On this point he could not help going back to the very similar manner in which several other motions of the same description with his own had been put off by the Government, particularly that of the hon. member for Birmingham, and that of the hon. member for Lincolnshire, relative to the repeal of the Malt-tax, which had been coolly put off by some member of the Government moving as an Amendment, that the House should proceed to discuss some matter relative to Ireland. It was a most extraordinary thing that matters so intimately referring to the dreadful distresses of this country should be thus delayed and dallied with by a Reforming Ministry and Reformed House of Commons. He was perfectly at a loss to understand how the business of the country was to be carried on, if the Government were allowed to interpose with these repeated interruptions. They created the most lamentable confusion and delay. He thought that the motion he had wished to bring forward was most intimately connected with the public welfare; however, he must, of course, give way, for he knew that many Members who went entirely with him in his views on the subject, yet supported Ministers in this proceeding, from a notion of not obstructing public business, or embarrassing the Government, and that what support he might receive, if he persisted, would be reluctantly granted on the same supposed grounds. He himself would be one of the last either to embarras Ministers or obstruct public business. On the contrary he wished to expedite it; and as such appeared to be the wish of the House, he would consent to postpone his Motion, provided the noble Lord would pledge himself that on Monday the motion should not be again postponed.

Lord *Althorp* said, that nothing but a consideration of what was due to the public service induced him to pursue the present course. It was very true, that his right hon. friend the Secretary to the Treasury had told the hon. Gentleman that the Ordnance Estimates were very pressing; and his right hon. friend thought that they might be brought forward to night. It was, however, found subsequently that they might be postponed, and therefore he had proposed to avail himself of this evening to bring forward his financial statement. He would frankly tell the hon. Gentleman, that he thought it desirable that the financial statement should be heard before the hon. Gentleman's motion was gone into, and his proposition was made with that view. He was glad the hon. Gentleman permitted him to make his statement before the motion was brought forward. So far as he himself was concerned, he would be ready to give the hon. Gentleman every possible facility for bringing on the question on Monday next. He would now move the Order of the Day for going into a Committee of Supply.

Mr. Attwood's Motion postponed.

The House then resolved into a Committee of Supply.

The Budget.]—Lord *Althorp* rose, and spoke as follows: Sir, in calling the attention of the Committee to the statements which I have to make of the financial condition of the country, I shall take the liberty, in performing this part of my duty, of first directing the attention of the Committee to those reductions in the various departments of the State which have at various times and on previous occasions been brought under the notice of the House, as an evidence of our endeavours to reduce taxation. In trespassing upon the attention of the Committee with this statement, I think that I act fairly and justly towards the Administration of which I am a Member, because when we entered upon office, we did it with a pledge to apply ourselves to introduce economy to the utmost extent in our power; and on this, the first occasion of bringing any financial statement before a Reformed Parliament, I think it is right that I should state what progress has been made in redeeming that pledge. I shall, therefore, state the number of places and offices which we have successively abolished and the amount of salary which has been reduced, in order to show the House that we have applied ourselves to effect the object we promised and that we have succeeded in reducing to a considerable extent the expenditure of the country. The total number of places abolished by the present Administration is 1,387; and the total amount of salary done away is 231,406*l.* From this 231,406*l.*, however, there must be deducted 38,000*l.*, the amount of the retired allowances; for the Committee is aware that when we have found an office useless, and something was to be gained by reducing the salary we have not hesitated to abolish it, though the whole amount of salary could not be immediately saved. Deducting the retired allowance, then, the saving will not be 231,000*l.*, but about 192,000*l.* Among the places abolished there were three offices which were usually accompanied by the possession of seats in Parliament, the salary of which amounted to 21,894*l.* The diplomatic expenses have been reduced to the extent of 91,735*l.*; but I think it right to say, that we cannot claim credit for the whole amount of the reduction. The regulations made by the late Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the Earl of Aberdeen, reduced these expenses 34,000*l.*, and my noble friend, the present Secretary, has made a further reduction of 57,000*l.* There, is, however, in this year a little additional charge on the Consolidated Fund, arising from places of 1,181*l.* If the Committee looks at what has been done by the present Administration during the last two years, however, it will find that 652 places were abolished in 1831, and 613 in 1832. That, however, is not the whole number, for some were previously got rid of; and the whole number abolished, as I before said, is 1,387. The average income, or salary, of the places abolished is thus 173*l.* 10*s.* I state these facts to the Committee to show that we have applied ourselves to reduce places that were useless to the public, and I hope and trust that the Committee will think that we have exerted ourselves to the utmost. I will add, that it is still our intention to abolish places wherever we can, and save all that we possibly can from the expenditure of the country. I must also add, that during these two years 506 persons have been brought from the retired list in the revenue department and placed on active service, by which a saving of the retired allowance has been made of 28,000*l.* I think I only do what is just towards ourselves in making this statement in reference to the saving we have made. I shall now begin my financial view, by stating the amount of the income and expenditure for the year, between the 5th of April, 1832, and the 5th of April, 1833. The amount of the income for the year was 46,853,000*l.*; the amount of the expenditure was 45,366,000*l.*, leaving an excess of income over expenditure of 1,487,000*l.* The Committee will, I have no doubt, recollect that in the Estimates I made last Session, I stated the probable excess of the income over the expenditure below this. I only calculated the excess at 800,000*l.*; but I am happy to say, that, by the reduction of expenditure, the excess of income over expenditure which is 1,487,000*l.*, will more than enable us to cover the deficiencies of the preceding year. That deficiency the Committee will recollect was 1,240,412*l.* Taking the two together, the Committee will see that the improvement on the revenue of the present year is not less than 2,728,000*l.* This, however, I must say, has been brought about—not so much by the increase of the income of the country as the decrease of the expenditure. I will now state what the income of the country was for the two years. For 1832, it was 46,618,000*l.*; for 1833, it was 46,853,000*l.*; showing an excess in the latter year of only 235,000*l.*, and proving that the surplus on the year arose from the expenditure being considerably reduced. The expenditure for the year ending April, 1832, was 47,859,000*l.*; for 1833, 45,366,000*l.*; the diminution being 2,493,000*l.* for the last year. It will be seen from this statement that the improvement which has taken place may be expected to be greater in the following year because it does not depend on any accidental increase of revenue, but on the economical management of the public funds, and on the saving thereby effected. I will now state more in detail the income and expenditure of the last year. The income last year from the Customs was 16,769,621*l.*; from the Excise, 16,529,131*l.*; from Stamps, 6,857,540*l.*; from Taxes, 5,003,937*l.*; from the Post Office, 1,453,900*l.*; from miscellaneous sources, 238,526*l.*; making a total of 46,852,650*l.* I will now state the expenditure. The sum charged for the Debt, including interest on Exchequer Bills—the whole sum charged to the Consolidated Fund for the Debt, was, 28,225,891*l.* The other charges on this fund were 1,859,248*l.*; making the whole charges on the Consolidated Fund 30,085,239*l.* The expenditure of the Supplies was—for the Army, 7,006,496*l.*; for the Navy, 4,505,000*l.*; for the Ordnance, 1,634,817*l.*; for the miscellaneous service, 2,138,953*l.*; making a total of 45,365,507*l.* The expenditure for the preceding year was for the Army, 7,551,000*l.*, which last year was reduced to 7,006,498*l.*; the expenditure for the Navy in the preceding year was 5,842,835*l.* and in the last year 4,505,000*l.*; the Ordnance for the preceding year was 1,478,944*l.*, and for last year 1,634,812*l.*; being an increase of 155,878*l.*; the Miscellaneous was 2,900,430*l.* in the preceding year, and in the last year it was 2,133,953*l.*; showing a diminution of nearly 800,000*l.* I have already stated, that the probable excess of income over expenditure last year was estimated at 800,000*l.*, whereas it actually amounted to 1,487,000*l.*; and I will now calculate what is likely to be the estimated balance of the ensuing year, supposing no alteration in the duties, and that the revenue should remain as at present. The whole amount of the revenue for the year will be, according to my estimate, 46,494,128*l.* In making this calculation it will be observed, that I do not take the revenue at so large a sum as last year. I look for a reduction in the duties of

Excise; because the arrears of the Malt-duties, which were due at the close of last year, were much greater than were due at the close of the present year. I calculate the income for the ensuing year at a lower rate than the income for the past year. The charges on the Consolidated Fund for the present year will not be the same as for the past year. I have obtained an estimate of the increased charge, and the expenditure charged on the Consolidated Fund for the year will not be less than 30,300,000*l.* The Supplies, the estimates of which have been laid on the Table, though they have not yet been all voted, are, for the Army, 6,673,251*l.*; for the Navy, 4,658,635*l.*; for the Ordnance, 1,455,223*l.*; for the miscellaneous services, 1,835,110*l.* Including the additional charge on the Consolidated Fund, the whole expenditure will be 44,922,219*l.* If this is deducted from the estimated income for the year, 46,494,128*l.*, it will leave a calculated surplus of 1,571,909*l.*, say 1,572,000*l.* The Committee is aware of the views which I entertain of a surplus revenue. There are, I know, great differences of opinion on this point; but I hope that Gentlemen, speaking generally, are of my opinion, that it is better, if we have any surplus, rather to diminish taxes, than employ it to pay off the debt. I have always, indeed, believed that it was not safe nor advisable to reduce the surplus too low. Hitherto, I believe, that I have reduced the surplus lower than it ought to have been; more so, I am afraid, than appears justifiable in the eyes of some hon. Members. Nevertheless, taking the situation of the country into consideration, it is, in my opinion, desirable that a reduction of taxes should be made to the extent of the surplus. I have stated the probable surplus of the income at 1,571,909*l.* With respect to these reductions, the principle on which I have always acted is, to make the reductions as much as possible on those taxes which fall on industry. I am aware that the reduction I have to propose will not be such as I have heard hon. Gentlemen state in the House, and still less will they be such as I have heard has been mentioned out of the House. I am not prepared to reduce the taxes 30,000,000*l.* nor 20,000,000*l.* as statements have been made out of doors, because it would be impossible to reduce taxes to that amount, as the Committee must be well aware, without destroying public credit. However, I think the reduction of taxes which I shall propose, will be such, considering the articles to which it applies, as will give considerable relief. Before going any further, I think it is necessary to speak of those taxes, which it has been proposed to reduce, and which, it has been stated, press very much on the industry of the country, and which I am afraid, will continue to press on it for some time, as I do not mean to make any reduction in them on the present occasion. The first tax of the kind I shall notice is the tax on malt. My hon. friend, the member for Lincolnshire, has given notice that he will bring forward a motion to reduce the duty on malt, Sir, the duty on malt last year amounted to 4,825,128*l.*, and the total reduction of the Malt duties at present is therefore, quite inconsistent with the state of the revenue. I will take the opportunity of considering what has been the course of the Malt duties, and I will consider whether the Malt duties press hard on any particular class, and, as a financial question, whether it is one of the taxes which ought to be first reduced. I will state the produce of the Malt duties for the last few years. In 1830 they amounted to 3,813,304*l.*; in 1831, they amounted to 3,436,271*l.*; and in 1832, after the duties on beer were taken off, they amounted to 4,359,332*l.*; while, in the year ending January 5th, 1833, they amounted to 4,825,125*l.* Looking at the question in a financial point of view, is it not apparent that this tax does not press so hard on the article as to reduce the consumption? If the welfare of the producer were concerned, I might be disposed to reduce this duty; but on looking at the price of barley, I am sure that no Gentleman will contend that its price does not bear a proper proportion to the price of other grain. I say, then, that looking at the question both as a financial question concerning the amount of the tax, and as the interests of the consumers and producers are concerned, and seeing that there is no unfair depreciation of the price of this species of grain—for these reasons, I say, I cannot consent to the reduction of the duty. I am aware that this doctrine will not be popular; but the duties of the Chancellor of the Exchequer seldom are popular; and though it be unpopular to say so, I must say that the Malt-tax, looking at it under the several points of view I have mentioned is too productive and too little injurious to be now removed. The next tax, on which I own I feel great doubts as to the decision to which I have come, because my own opinion is of that nature concerning the tax as to leave me with a tendency to doubt the propriety of the conclusion to which, after the best consideration, I have been obliged to come—the next tax I shall advert to, is one which some of the hon. Gentlemen opposite are very eager to get removed—the tax I mean is the Stamp duties on Newspapers. With respect to the Stamp-duties on Newspapers I have already frequently stated my opinion—I think it a bad tax. I think it a tax productive of many evils, because the effect of it undoubtedly is, to give great advantage to persons who are bold enough to evade the law; and thus it gives a monopoly of cheap publications into the hands of disreputable persons. On this ground, I most certainly desire to see the tax repealed; but if, on this principle, a part of the tax were reduced, we could not stop till we repealed the whole. If the whole tax gives a premium to evade the law, whatever part of the tax may be left will be a premium to take advantage of the law to that extent. The question, then, which I have to consider is, whether, in the present situation of the country—and that situation I admit is one in which there is great distress—distress does prevail to a considerable extent; but the question I have to consider is, whether the taking off this tax, which amounts to 440,000*l.*, is a measure which will give relief to any considerable class of the community. I see my hon. friend opposite the member for the city of Lincoln (Mr. Bulwer) is taking notes; and I admit that the tax being removed would give relief to a certain extent; but the tax on newspapers is not one which presses on the industry of the country, and which would by its removal give a great relief. I know that it is argued that the reduction of this tax may be compensated by another mode of taxation, and that it is not fair, in reducing the tax on newspapers, to calculate the loss to the Revenue at 440,000*l.* I admit that it would not amount to that, because something would be gained by the increased consumption of paper, and that, in fact, the loss to the revenue would be considerably less. Some Gentlemen have proposed that a postage should be levied on newspapers, and that the revenue obtained from that source would more than counterbalance the loss by reducing the Stamp Duties; but, from the inquiries I have made (and I have examined the subject), I am satisfied that this is a fallacious view of the question. I have inquired, and I mention it, because I wish to show that it was not without consideration that I came to the opinion, that these gentlemen had not made accurate calculations. They thought that by laying, instead of the Stamp Duty on Newspapers, one penny postage on each paper the revenue would not suffer. But I believe that the expectations of what the Government would gain by the postage are much over rated. In carrying Newspapers, the Government would have many rivals; the stage coaches would carry Newspapers, and carry them for a far less sum than one penny each paper. The consequence I believe would be, that no Newspapers would be carried by the mail-coaches, or that, at least, a great diminution would take place in the number now carried by them. The great mass of Newspapers are sent from the metropolis in large bundles, to be distributed in the different towns. They are made up in parcels by the news-venders, and sent to different places, so that the expense of carrying one paper by a coach must be very small. The question, then, which I have to decide is, whether I shall take off the tax upon Newspapers upon speculative grounds, believing, as I do, that those who recommend that will not find their calculation correct, and sacrifice a revenue of 440,000*l.* less by the increased amount of the duty on paper; or shall I apply that 440,000*l.* to reduce taxes which press more immediately on the industry of the country? It is with regret, I must own, particularly as regards my own opinion; for I admit that on a former occasion I did hold out an expectation, I cannot say I pledged myself; but I did hold out an expectation—I implied, and such was then my intention—that I would reduce this tax. After much consideration, however, I have altered my opinion, and I have frankly stated to the House my reasons for the alteration. I do not think it necessary for me to apply myself to other taxes which Gentlemen have proposed to repeal, but I will proceed to my own plans. The first tax to which I propose to call the attention of the Committee, because it regularly comes before the Committee as part of the Excise, and will be the first Resolution I shall move—is of a trifling nature. I allude to the tax on tiles, which amounts to 37,000*l.* When on a former occasion I removed the duty from slates, my attention was called to the pressure of the duty on tiles. I felt, at the time, that the tile manufacturers were exposed to great hardships; but I could not then take off more taxes. I felt that it was desirable, that it was even just, that when the tax on slates was removed, the tax on tiles should not be suffered to remain. I believe that the tax on tiles was originally imposed only to counterbalance the duty imposed on slates, and therefore I was convinced that I ought to take the first opportunity of removing it. That opportunity has now arrived, and I propose to take that duty off. The next tax to which I shall call the Committee's attention, is one, the reduction of which will not cause much, indeed I am not sure that it will cause any great loss, and that it will not be immediately replaced—it is a tax respecting newspapers, the tax on advertisements. I believe that the reduction of the tax on advertisements will give great relief to the trading and productive classes. The tax now is *3s. 6d.* for every advertisement, and however often the advertisement is repeated the duty is not altered. The consequence is, that the advantages of advertising, which are generally only obtained after two or three insertions, are lost or burthened with a heavy duty, and to reduce this tax will give the trading part of the country great relief. I propose then to reduce the tax on advertisements. At present it is for every insertion *3s. 6d.* I propose to reduce the duty for the first insertion to *2s.*; for the second to *1s. 6d.*; and for the third and every subsequent insertion to *1s.* The effect of this will not be, I should think, to cause a loss to the revenue equal to the whole amount of the reduction, because the consequence of the reduction will be to cause the advertisements to be often repeated when the advertisers have not to pay as much for every insertion. Certainly it will enable the proprietors of newspapers to insert repeated advertisements at a cheaper rate than they can insert a single advertisement; for by keeping the type standing they will be saved the expense of composition. Although, therefore, I do not think we need apprehend much loss of revenue by this change, I calculate it will be about half.

Sir *Robert Peel:* What is the present amount of revenue from advertisements?

Lord *Althorp:* The whole revenue from advertisements now amounts to 150,000*l.*, and I think I am quite safe at calculating the reduction at only 75,000*l.*, or one half. The next tax in which I propose to make an alteration is one in which it is most desirable to make an alteration—I mean the reduction of the duty on Marine Insurance. I think I shall not cause any large sacrifice of revenue by this alteration, and the alteration will be of great advantage to the shipping interests and to trade generally. The present rate of duty is on the coasting trade *1s. 3d.* per cent, when the premium does not exceed *20s.*, and *2s. 6d.* per cent when it does exceed *20s.* On the foreign trade it is higher; being *2s. 6d.* per cent when the premium does not exceed *20s.*, and *5s.* per cent when it does exceed *20s.* The net amount of revenue yielded by this rate of duty is 220,000*l.* I think it right to state the amount of this tax at different periods, that the Committee may see how different it is from the tax on malt. In 1815 the amount of this duty, though I must observe that it was large in that year, but in 1815 the amount of this duty was 452,000*l.* and last year it was only 220,000*l.* That shows that the effect of the tax on policies of marine insurance has been to drive this branch of trade out of the country. It is, therefore, one of the taxes which I think ought to be reduced. The proposition I have to submit to the Committee on this subject will, I believe, be acceptable to the different interests concerned. I do not propose to alter the tax on policies in the coasting trade. My proposition is, that on all policies on vessels engaged in foreign trade, in which the premium is under *15s.*, the duty shall be reduced from *2s. 6d.* to *1s. 3d.*, and on policies where the premium is under *30s.* and above *15s.*, I propose to reduce the duty to *2s. 6d.* When the premium exceeds *30s.* I propose that the present duty shall continue to be levied. From what I have already heard, I believe that this arrangement will be satisfactory to the interests concerned. Of course they would be better satisfied if the reduction were greater, but the reduction that is made falls on those policies, in which relief is most required. I calculate the reduction of the revenue which may take place from this cause at about one half, or 100,000*l.* This reduction though small I have great pleasure in proposing, because it will relieve the shipping interest to a certain extent, and bring back a part perhaps of the profitable trade which the high tax had banished. The next branch of taxes to which I will apply myself is the Assessed-taxes. With respect to these taxes, the pressure on the House and on the Government has been for the total repeal of the House and Window-tax. The total repeal of them would make a reduction of

2,594,000*l.* I confess that, however I may wish to accommodate and relieve the industrious population of the towns, I should not be justified in sacrificing all the surplus revenue for that object. I have endeavoured to consider if some mode could not be adopted, by which the productive industry of the town population may be relieved, while this tax might remain upon those who are best able to bear it; I mean, whether an arrangement could not be made, by which the shopkeepers may be relieved from the duty, while houses that are not converted into shops shall remain chargeable as at present. The Committee may probably be aware, that according to the present law regarding the Window-tax, there is an allowance made, by which three windows are struck off from each house to which a shop is attached. I think this is a principle upon which we may proceed. I do not intend to confine the windows for shops to any specific number; but I propose to take the duty off windows in all shops employed as such, or as ware-rooms. In the case of houses which include shops, warehouses, or store-houses, it is intended that the number of windows appropriated to the shop, warehouse, or store-house, shall be deducted from the number of windows in the house; for instance, in a house containing altogether fifteen windows, five of which are appropriated to the shop or warehouse, five windows shall be deducted from the total number reckoned for the house; so that the house will be considered as one having only ten windows; and, that, in this case there would be a reduction of one-third of the whole window duty for that house. Now, with respect to the house-duty, it is intended to proceed upon the same principle; and in a house containing fifteen windows, of which five belongs to the shop, the House-duty will also be reduced in the proportion of one-third of the whole amount hitherto payable for the house. I hope that this will be considered to give a considerable relief to shopkeepers and others engaged in trade; because, with respect to their shops, they will be relieved entirely both from the house and Window-tax; and they will only be liable to pay these taxes for such portion of their houses as is appropriated to different purposes from those of trade. This reduction, I calculate, will produce a diminution of the revenue, arising from the House and Window-taxes, of about 100,000*l.* With regard to some of the other classes of the Assessed-taxes, the house has been made fully aware that great complaints have been brought by the parties interested. This is the case particularly with respect to the duty on taxed carts, the recent measure respecting which, though in some cases it may have operated as a tax, was in reality a reduction of taxation. But as it has not as yet produced much effect, it is my intention to propose that this tax be entirely reduced, and that those carts which have been subject to the duty of 30*s.* shall now be entirely free from that impost. The remission of this tax will produce a diminution of the revenue to the extent of 30,000*l.* There is another tax of which great complaints have been made, as bearing heavily upon the trading interest—I allude to the duty for shopmen, warehousemen, store-keepers, and porters. This, also, I intend to take away; and I calculate that it will produce a diminution of 45,000*l.* There is another class who are connected with the mercantile interest on whose employment a duty is levied—commercial travellers and hawkers. This tax I also propose to repeal. The amount arising from it is trifling—only 4,500*l.*; but there is a more important class of men, who subject their employers to taxation—I mean book-keepers and clerks, whom it is likewise my intention to relieve from this burthen. I next intend to propose to take off the duty which is now levied on stewards, bailiffs, managers, and overseers, the amount of which is inconsiderable, being only 9,500*l.* a-year. The whole of these reductions in the Assessed Taxes amount to a sum of 244,000*l.* The next point to which I am about to address myself is one on which I am, in a certain degree, pledged. When I laid the additional duty on raw cottons in 1831, I said that it was radically wrong in principle, and that, on the first opportunity which arrived, it ought to be reduced. That opportunity has now arrived, and it is, therefore, incumbent on this House to take off the additional duty which was imposed in 1831. The Committee are, no doubt aware of the circumstances under which it was laid on. It was thought both by me and by this House, that it was more desirable that the tax on printed calicoes should be taken off entirely, as being more contrary to principle than the tax upon raw cotton. When I propose to remit this tax, it is not because I think it has had any bad effect; on the contrary, the manufactures connected with cotton have flourished under its operation; but we must recollect how dangerous it is to lay taxes upon the raw material, in cases in which we have to compete with foreign manufacturers, though this danger does not always show itself at the moment. It may remain dormant, because there is no immediate competition; but foreign manufacturers gradually establish themselves, and make their way in different markets; and by the time that people begin to perceive the mischief, it has become too late to remedy it. It is, therefore, necessary to be exceedingly careful in imposing any additional burthen on the raw material. At the same time I do not propose to put raw cotton on a better footing than it was when the addition to the tax in 1831 was proposed. I propose only to take off that amount of the tax (as nearly as I can calculate it) which was imposed on that occasion. Previous to that period, there was an *ad valorem* duty upon the pound of raw cotton to an amount which might be equivalent to three-eighths of a penny, to which were then added two-eighths of a penny, making the whole about five-eighths of a penny per lb., the result of that being, that the whole amount of the duty on cotton for the last year had been 626,000*l.* It has been estimated that the portion of the duty imposed in 1831 might be about 326,000*l.*; but I do not think its reduction will diminish the revenue more than 300,000*l.* In most cases where a duty is reduced, we may calculate on the deficiency being partially made up by an increased consumption: but in this case I cannot anticipate such a result, and I expect that the revenue will lose to the full amount of the sum repealed. I am now to speak of a tax of more importance, and one on which I consider a reduction to be most desirable, though the tax produces a considerable amount of revenue—I mean the tax on soap, the annual amount of which at present is 1,186,000*l.* I propose to reduce that duty by one half, which may, at first sight, appear a great reduction; but I believe that, all things considered, the real diminution will not amount to more than half of the apparent amount, because on this reduction we may fairly reckon that we may save the drawbacks, by which 100,000*l.* are paid back to the producers: and I think we may also calculate that a great portion of the remaining diminution will be made up by increased consumption. The consequence, also, of putting an end to the illicit manufacture, is deserving of consideration. The duty upon the cwt. at present is 28*s.* Now the greater expense to the illicit manufacturer than to the fair trader is estimated at 12*s.* per cwt., as I believe has been proved by some persons at present actually engaged in the manufacture, which leaves the illicit manufacturer, under the present system, a profit of no less than 16*s.* per cwt. and an advantage to that extent over the fair trader; whereas, when the duty is reduced to half, if he be still subject to the same disadvantage as the manufacturer, he will only have an advantage over the fair trader of 2*s.* on the cwt. I really hope and trust that the effect will be to destroy nearly, if not entirely, the illicit manufacture. It is impossible not to say that the illicit trade is carried on at present to a very great extent. And I, therefore, do not exaggerate when I say, that the reduction per cwt. of one-half will not produce a decrease of the revenue of more than 300,000*l.* I have now stated the taxes which I wish to reduce; and in making my selection, I have endeavoured to do it in such a manner as shall apply the greatest practicable relief to the productive classes. I have also endeavoured to relieve the country of taxes on some articles of very general consumption. Some Gentlemen may wish that I had made a different selection, but altogether I hope the House will be satisfied that these taxes ought to be reduced. I do not think that any Gentleman will pretend to say that the removal of these taxes will not relieve the country. Greater reductions may be called for, but none can deny that these will produce some effect at least. I do not think that any hon. Member will say that every one of these taxes ought not to be repealed.

Mr. *O'Connell* inquired whether the taxes on advertisements would be equalized in England and Ireland, and whether the drawbacks on soap exported to Ireland were to be taken away.

Lord *Althorp*: I will not at present answer the hon. Member's question; but I do think that there ought not to be a lower duty in Ireland than in England. I will now recapitulate to the House the particulars of the different taxes which I intend to reduce: they are these:—

	£.
1. Tiles—whole duty	37,000
2. Marine Insurance—estimated diminution	100,000
3. Advertisements—ditto	75,000
4. Assessed Taxes—Reduction of House and Window Duty on Shops ...	244,000
5. Cotton — Reduction of additional Duty imposed in 1831	300,000

6. Soap (half present duty)	593,000
	1,349,000
Estimated return on Soap	293,000
Probable loss to the revenue	1,056,000
Surplus for year ending 1834 ...	1,572,000
Estimated surplus after the above reductions	516,000

The amount of surplus is smaller than it has been usual to calculate upon; but I do think that, in the present state of the country, it is for its advantage to act upon the principle which has guided me, and to carry the reduction to the greatest practicable extent. I have detained the House in explaining all the details of my reductions at considerable length; and as to any general arguments upon such a statement, I do not think that they are very necessary. As to those taxes on which I have not thought it my duty to propose any reductions, I have stated my grounds for not reducing them; and I have also stated the grounds on which I proposed to reduce those of which I have given the particulars. Some hon. Gentlemen, I fear, may object to certain taxes being omitted, and some to others; but I hope, as I before said, that the House altogether will be satisfied. I will only detain the House with one observation more. I hope the House will consider, that whatever they do further for the relief of any particular classes which suffer under the burthens of taxation, they must confine their labours to the substitution of other taxes, and to make further reductions. I hope and trust that they will not be induced to do anything which would be detrimental to the public creditor; that they will not press for the repeal of a greater number of taxes, without substituting others; because the Committee will see, from the state of the revenue which I have laid before them, that it would be impossible to grant it. I do not think it necessary to detain the Committee any longer, but have now merely to propose the Resolution—"That it is the opinion of this Committee that the duty payable on tiles shall henceforth cease and determine."

Mr. *Hume* could not deny that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as far as he had gone, had done well; but he only regretted that the noble Lord had not gone further. The noble Lord might have proceeded on the principle which had guided him in reducing the duty upon soap, with regard to which he had told them that the revenue would be benefited by the reduction of the duty by one half per cent. He could tell the noble Lord, however, that the country would not be satisfied if he could not bring forward something better than his commutation of tithes and taxes. Great dissatisfaction would arise, as soon as the country was informed of the method to be pursued respecting the House and Window-tax. They were now placed in a position in which it was necessary to incur some risk, in order to grant relief in those taxes which pressed so heavily upon the poor in particular. With regard to his observations on the duty upon malt, the noble Lord was entirely mistaken; for he had shown by a statement that, forty years ago, when the population of the country was only half what it is at present, the consumption of malt was greater; so that the noble Lord might fairly reckon, if the duty were reduced to ten shillings a quarter, there would be double the quantity consumed. Thus the people would gain much, and the revenue would lose but little. He hoped that the noble Lord, or, if the noble Lord would not, that the House, would reduce the duty on malt to ten shillings, when he was sure the revenue would not lose by it. With regard to the Stamp-duty upon newspapers, the noble Lord had looked upon it merely in a financial point of view; but he should have remembered that ignorance was the greatest bane of society. It was, therefore, the duty of the noble Lord to lessen that tax, even at a sacrifice of revenue. He thought that the objections against the loss which would arise to the revenue could be commuted for postage; and he trusted that the House would not allow the subject to sleep, and that the noble Lord would take a better view of the matter. With respect to the next tax on which a reduction was to be made, he candidly concurred as to the amount of the reduction. He objected to the complexity of the details, in the arrangements about the duty on advertisements, which, if made more simple, would be much more beneficial. The noble Lord was mistaken as to the number of advertisements which required to be repeated; as it was, the reduction would only operate in favour of one particular class; and if the duty were reduced to 1*s.* 6*d.* on all advertisements, the reduction would be much better received.

With regard to marine insurances, it would have been much better to reduce that tax altogether. With regard to the Assessed-taxes, he concurred with the noble Lord, as far as he went; but he was extremely sorry that he had not proposed to grant relief from the House and Window taxes. It was a tax which gave extreme annoyance, and pressed very heavily on the Metropolis in particular. The noble Lord would soon find that a great portion of the houses would be left empty; and such a diminution of the value of houses would take place, that he would be at last compelled to grant a reduction of the duty. He approved of the reduction of the Soap Duty, and he concurred in the propriety of reducing duties, inorder to prevent smuggling; but why not carry the principle to its full extent? Why leave a premium to the smuggler, even of two shillings? Why not abolish the duty and not leave a single shilling as a premium to the smuggler? He, therefore, hoped, that the noble Lord would yet reconsider that part of the subject. The noble Lord must not suppose that the country would be satisfied unless some method was discovered for introducing a commutation of taxes, so as to throw the burthen off industry, and put it upon property. Unless the noble Lord did this, the people would be entitled to press for a much larger reduction than had yet been announced. He had thus stated what he approved of in the noble Lord's statements, and what he did not approve of; and he would conclude, by expressing his hope, that a reduction would be made at least to the full extent of the surplus of 516,000*l.*

Colonel *Davies* would only trouble the Committee with a few observations. He wished, in the first instance, to notice what appeared to him to be an apparent and not a real saving in the military establishment of the country; 120,000*l.* had been applied last year in the purchase of half-pay annuities, whilst this year only 20,000*l.* was applied to the same purpose. The difference of 100,000*l.*, however, was only an apparent saving. With respect to the proposed reduction of taxation, he agreed with his hon. friend, the member for Middlesex, that a reduction of the duty on malt would have been most desirable. Such a reduction would have been a great advantage to the morals as well as an increase of comfort to the lower orders. The reduction of the Assessed-taxes was good as far as it went, but it would afford no relief whatever to many classes that now severely felt the pressure of the Assessed-taxes. At present, there was no duty payable on warehouses, and therefore the relief to the mercantile classes would be very small. Nor would the relief to the shopkeeper be so great as it might at first appear. The shopkeeper had only to compete with his neighbour who paid the same taxes as himself. The amount of those taxes, it was true, was very large, but the shopkeeper did not pay them ultimately—they fell on the consumer. But why not reduce the Assessed-taxes, so as to give relief to other classes besides the shopkeepers? Those who kept no shops, and those who lived in lodgings, and paid an increased rent in consequence of the high duty on their houses, were as well entitled to relief as the shopkeepers. If the House-duty had been repealed altogether, it would have afforded substantial relief, which it would not do if the present proposal was adhered to. The reduction of the duty on raw cotton, no doubt, would be hailed with great satisfaction by the Manchester people, who were fortunate in finding so good a friend in the noble Lord. The proposed reductions, however, he predicted, would not satisfy the country. The only mode in which reductions could be effected to any extent was by reducing the public establishments. If a Committee was granted to him, to consider what reductions could be made in the colonial and military establishments, he would forfeit his existence if he did not show that reductions might be made to the full amount of the Assessed-taxes. He hoped, when he moved for such a Committee, that he should find the noble Lord and his colleagues disposed to listen to a proposal which might lead to so important and beneficial a reduction.

Sir *Robert Peel* agreed in the remark of the noble Lord that the duties of a Chancellor of the Exchequer were very unpopular, and that it was impossible to satisfy the hopes of all parties who claimed a reduction of taxation. The observation of the noble Lord was perfectly just, and those who filled the situation which the noble Lord now filled had heretofore generally found their opponents more disposed to aggravate the unpopularity by clamour against taxation than, to lessen it by acquiescing in the opinion, that greater reductions were impossible. For his own part, he was not disposed to take that course, for he should have to avow opinions quite as unpopular as those avowed by the noble Lord. He would not say, that the noble Lord had not gone far enough in the reduction of taxation; he was rather disposed to complain of the noble Lord having carried reduction too far. It was dangerous to proceed with reduction to an extent which might affect our ability to keep faith with the public creditor. He thought it bad economy to reduce the surplus so far as to cut off all hope of that honest and legitimate diminution of the public burthens which we might effect by maintaining public credit, and enabling ourselves to reduce the interest of the public funds. The noble Lord proposed a reduction of 1,056,000*l.*; and this, be it observed, was, on his own showing, not on an increasing, but on a falling revenue. The noble Lord had shown that the revenue of 1832 was 46,618,016*l.*; in 1833, it was 46,852,650*l.*; but the estimate of 1834 was 46,494,128*l.*; making a falling off of not less than 356,000*l.* as compared with that of 1833. The reduction then was of 1,056,000*l.* on a falling revenue. Suppose the noble Lord should be disappointed as to the amount of expenditure, and circumstances, which it was impossible to guard against, should arise (which God forbid) to render it necessary to increase the expenditure—the danger of extreme reduction would be proportionally increased. He, therefore, thought that the noble Lord had carried his reductions to the fullest possible extent; and though he agreed with the noble Lord that it was difficult at the present time to maintain a large surplus for the purpose of redeeming debt, yet he thought it most unwise not to have a surplus, of a moderate amount, available to meet an unforeseen increase of expenditure; and thus enable the Government to avoid the great evil of creating fresh debt. A surplus of 516,000*l.* was the very least that should be maintained. In the general view which the noble Lord had taken of the subject he also entirely concurred. He thought the noble Lord had acted wisely in maintaining the system of taxation as it stood at present. All attempts to effect an extensive commutation of taxes, causing, as it necessarily must, in the present artificial state of society, the unsettlement of capital, must be productive of great injury. Another system of taxation might be proved by reason *a priori* to be better than the present; but the present being established, and the habits and occupations of the people having accommodated themselves to it, it might, though abstractedly less perfect, be, on the whole, preferable to any substitute. He thought likewise that the noble Lord had done well in not proposing an Income or a Property-tax. Nothing but a case of extreme necessity could justify Parliament in subjecting the people of this country, in a time of peace, to the inquisitorial process which must be resorted to in order to render that impost productive; and to have recourse to such a machinery for the purpose of raising two or three per cent would be most unwise. Such a tax was a great resource in time of necessity, and therefore he was unwilling, by establishing the offensive inquisition with which it must be accompanied, to create such an odium against it as might render it almost impracticable to resort to it in time of extreme necessity. The application of the tax to Ireland would be attended with extreme difficulty. He really believed that this circumstance formed the main obstacle to the establishment of the tax. It hardly could be contended, that if a Property-tax were established, Ireland should be exempted from its operation. He wished to see Ireland as much favoured as possible consistently with justice; but to impose a Property-tax upon England and Scotland, and to exempt Ireland from its operation, would, in his opinion, however unpopular that opinion might be, be exceedingly unjust. In England a Property-tax would be applied in the way of commutation of other existing taxes, and might thus afford material relief, but Ireland did not afford the materials of a commutation, and the Property-tax in Ireland would operate as a new and additional impost. The noble Lord had therefore wisely abstained from agitating a question which could not be satisfactorily settled. With respect to a tax upon property, as distinguished from a tax upon income he very much doubted whether it would promote the interests of the labouring classes, because it would diminish the funds at present appropriated to the encouragement of industry and the promotion of labour, and it would ultimately be found that the tax did not affect the person who paid it so much as the labourer, by diminishing his means of employment. He approved of the repeal of the tax upon raw cotton, which was imposed in 1831, for, though it might not hitherto have injuriously affected the cotton-manufacture of this country, though there was no evidence of incipient decay, yet irreparable injury might be done by improvident taxes on the raw materials of our great manufactures without our having any previous warning. A very slight premium given to a foreign rival might turn the current in his favour. At the time the additional tax was proposed by the noble Lord, he had expressed his hope that it would speedily be repealed. On a former occasion he had observed, that after the reduction of the duty upon slates, the tax upon tiles should be one of the first taxes repealed by the House, because the former were used principally in the houses of the richer classes, and the latter in cottages and farm-houses. However unpopular it might be to say so, he must confess he thought the noble Lord had done right in not taking off the duty upon newspapers. The reduction of the taxes which had been selected would afford greater relief to the community than the remission of the duty upon newspapers. He saw no proof that newspapers were labouring and panting under the duty. Free discussion was not checked by it. Useful and amusing information was at present supplied to the people by several societies, without, as far as he knew, any violation of the existing law. Besides, the remission of the duty, and the subjection of newspapers to postage, would operate as a bonus to the inhabitants of the metropolis, who, from the circumstance of their residing at the fountain head of knowledge, and being congregated in great masses, were already in advance of the rest of the community, whilst persons who lived in the country, and were further removed from the sources of information, would have to pay a heavy tax upon its conveyance, increasing in proportion to the distance of that conveyance, and, therefore, in proportion probably to the disadvantages under which they at present laboured. If he understood the noble Lord's proposition with respect to the House and Window-duty, it was this, that no duty should be paid upon windows which were used for the purposes of trade, and that the abatement of the House-duty should follow the scale of the reduction of the duty on windows — that was to say, the greater the number of windows employed for shop purposes, the greater would be the remission, not only of window, but of house duty. He feared that this would operate as a great encouragement to fraud. If the noble Lord could deal with shops as they now stood, and remit the tax upon windows *bonâ fide* appropriated to shop purposes, he would have no objection to such a proposition; but he apprehended that advantage would be taken of the proffered indulgence to bring windows not *bonâ fide* required for shop purposes within the terms of the exemption, and by that means obtain a double remission. He had no doubt that if the noble Lord's proposition should be adopted as he had stated it to the House, it would give rise to much expensive litigation. For instance it was proposed to exempt the windows in show-rooms. But what constituted a show-room? He knew what it was at present, but he feared that it would be impossible to define it accurately when a double pecuniary advantage would result from appropriating rooms to the purposes of exhibition. That, however, was a matter of detail, and he would not longer dwell upon it at that moment. On the whole he was well pleased with the noble Lord's statement. The doubt which chiefly pressed upon his mind was as to whether the noble Lord had not gone too far in the way of reduction. It was better to avow that opinion at once; he cared little whether it was popular or not, but he believed that the interests of the country peculiarly required a frank expression of opinion on subjects which were not popular. If remission were to take place, he was glad that the noble Lord had applied himself to the reduction of the taxes which pressed upon productive industry generally, rather than to those which affected a particular class. From the reduction of the duty on soap he anticipated very beneficial effects, for nothing conduced more to sobriety and to the encouragement of domestic habits among the lower classes than a pride in cleanliness, and the means of commanding it. On the whole the reduction of taxation had been carried, if not too far, at least as far as was possible, consistently with the maintenance of public credit.

Sir *Samuel Whalley* suggested, that a tax should be imposed on the public funds, and further reductions made in the taxes which pressed upon industry. The reductions, proposed by the noble Lord would not meet the wishes of the country, or afford that relief to the trading portion of the community which the noble Lord and the right hon. member for Tamworth anticipated; and he earnestly entreated the noble Lord, if he wished to give satisfaction to the people, to review that part of his plan which related to the House and Window-duty. He concurred with the right hon. Baronet in thinking that the noble Lord's arrangement upon that point would open the door to fraud; but he had another objection to it, which was, that it would afford no relief to the poor suffering shopkeepers, but would benefit exclusively what he might call the aristocracy of trade. The humble shopkeeper, who had no range of show-rooms, would derive no relief from the proposed remission. If the noble Lord would not totally repeal these duties, it would be much better, rather than adopt the plan which the noble Lord had proposed, to exempt totally from the Window-tax all houses rated below a certain amount—say 20*l*., 30*l*., or 40*l*.—and to reduce the house-duty in proportion. The noble Lord appeared to be ignorant of the extreme pressure upon the lower class of shop-keepers in the metropolis—it was so great that it was utterly impossible the great majority of them could much longer continue to carry on business. He would not deny his approbation of the selection of taxes for reduction as far as it went, but he thought that the reduction ought to have been carried much further.

Mr. *O'Connell* was not surprised that what had fallen from the right hon. member for Tamworth relative to the property of Ireland should have excited the merriment of the House—[*No, no!*] He maintained that when the right hon. Baronet (Sir Robert Peel), alluded to Irish property, and a Property-tax in Ireland, the merriment of the House was excited—[*No, no*]. It was so, and he was glad to see the House in so merry a humour when his country was mentioned; and, so long as they were proposing no further harsh measures for Ireland, he supposed he ought to be satisfied. At least, he would endeavour to make himself contented, though they taunted Ireland, if they did not further ill treat her. Now, with respect to the reduction of taxation proposed by the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he would observe that, of the forty-seven or forty-eight million of taxes which existed, about 42,000,000*l*. of them were shared by both countries alike; whereas the 5,000,000*l*. of taxes on which the proposed reductions were to be made affected England alone. Now, when he complained of this on the part of Ireland, how was he met? He was anxious to fling off more in melancholy than in anger the laugh by which he had been assailed. Did the right hon. member for Tamworth opposite not know that there was already a Property-tax in Ireland? There was a probate tax—there was a legacy duty—all of which fell upon property. He might be mistaken in his opinion, but he would prefer a real Property-tax to any tax which cramped the springs of industry. If a Property-tax were to be imposed in Ireland, it would reach the pockets of absentees, who contributed so much in this country towards paying the Assessed-taxes, for which Ireland got no credit in the calculation of what she contributed towards the support of the State. If her share of the taxes which was paid in England were estimated, it would be found that Ireland was an overtaxed instead of an undertaxed country, as had been erroneously asserted. Since the peace, little or no reduction of taxation had taken place in Ireland; it did not in the whole amount to half a million; while in England the reduction amounted to more than 26,000,000*l*. This was the relative situation of the two countries since the peace. It had been said that, during the war, Ireland had not been equally taxed with England; but subsequent to the union, and during the war, taxes to the amount of 5,000,000*l*. had been imposed on Ireland; but what was the consequence? Why, a deficiency of two millions and a half in the revenue. That showed that Ireland had been taxed too much. The only part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's proposed reduction, which directly affected Ireland, was the reduction of the Advertisement duty. Now, up to 1814, the duty on advertisements in Ireland was 1*s*.; and at that rate the whole duty amounted (in 1813) to 21,253*l*. In 1814, a duty of 2*s*. 6*d*. was imposed on each advertisement; and the consequence was a decrease in the amount of duty to 14,000*l*. In 1829, the amount of duty on advertisements was 14,985*l*. 0*s*.6*d*; so that the 2*s*. 6*d*. duty caused a fall to the amount of one-third in the whole duty; and so it had since remained. And now, what was proposed? The advertisement duty in England was 3*s*. 6*d*. of which the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to take off 1*s*. 6*d*.; whereas, in Ireland, the duty was 2*s*. 6*d*., of which the right hon. Gentleman proposed to take off 6*d*., so that England was to have three times as much benefit as Ireland by this reduction. Why not act upon the principle, *pro re rata?* and give the poor country equal relief to the rich country? Why not take off 1*s*. 6*d*. from the Irish as well as the English advertisement? If this were done, he firmly believed it would increase the amount of revenue. The arrangement of the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer would favour the interests of those great monopolists of the fourth estate in this country, who sometimes condescended to throw the shield of their protection around Ministers, and sometimes held up the rod. The persons by whom this great engine was conducted were unknown—they shrunk from discovery, and were sorry when they were discovered; and yet they assumed the mighty WE. This mighty WE of the Press commanded the country to a considerable extent, few having the moral desperation to meet them and set them at defiance. He should be glad to see the period arrive when this great monopoly was put an end to, and the public Press set entirely free. At present, the consequence of the Stamp-duties on Papers was, that the gaols were filled with men who drove the illicit trade of smuggling knowledge, for the people, and like all smuggled goods, it was not often of the best quality. He thought it would be advisable to remove the duty on Papers altogether, if it were only to prevent the gaols of this country being crowded by persons who were tempted to violate the law. In the only part of the reductions which affected Ireland, she was not placed on an equality with this country. The question of equality was not one of pounds, shillings, and pence. If a man possessing 100*l*. a-year were to be taxed 99*l*. and a man possessing 10,000*l*. a-year were to be taxed no more than 99*l*. the one man would be beggared, while the other would not feel the tax. The only reduction of taxation which would affect Ireland equally with this country was that on soap. But how came it to be introduced? The Chancellor of the Exchequer wished to check the progress of smuggling in this article in England, and could only do so by reducing the duty; and Ireland in consequence, came in for the collateral advantage. He did not expect that any thing that could fall from him would prove advantageous to his country, and therefore he would say no more upon this subject.

Sir *Robert Peel* protested against the unfairness of the hon. and learned Member representing those persons who had occasion to speak of Ireland, as speaking of that country in a tone of derision and insult. It was quite clear that the hon. and learned Gentleman was not speaking for the audience he was addressing, but was directing his observations elsewhere. When he spoke of the introduction of a Property-tax into England, and of the difficulty of enforcing it in Ireland, he appealed to the House whether he had used or insinuated one disrespectful expression towards that country? He ought to be, and certainly would be, the last man in that House to do so. It would be bad taste in any man to taunt Ireland with her poverty or her sufferings; but it was worse taste still to attribute to any hon. Member, because Gentlemen happened to smile in the progress of debate, a desire to taunt or insult Ireland or Irish feelings. He was glad he had this opportunity of setting himself right on the subject; and he would venture to assure the hon. and learned Member, that such a course of proceeding was altogether unworthy of his talents and acquirements, and ought not to be persevered in. Besides, it was likely he was afraid to be most mischievous to represent to the people of Ireland, that Englishmen were anxious to ridicule and insult them, when nothing could be further from the fact.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, all he had stated was, that the right hon. Gentleman had spoken of Ireland facetiously. Why, did the House forget the merriment that was created the moment the right hon. member for Tamworth mentioned the Property-tax and Ireland [*no, no*]. There certainly was a general laugh in the House when Ireland and the Property-tax was mentioned [*no no*]. Hon. Members might cry "no, no," if they pleased, but he maintained that such was the fact. He had felt it his duty to allude to that merriment, particularly when he found that they were so ready to coerce Ireland upon every occasion. He would ask, whether the "smile," as it was called, was not a smile of derision? Well, then, if it was only a joke, still it was a joke at Ireland's poverty. Some allusion had been made to his addressing himself to other auditories; it sometimes became his duty, his painful duty, to do so; but it was a duty from which he would not shrink; and if hon. Members laughed at his country—he would repeat, if they were ready to raise the laugh or the shout when his country was mentioned, while they were equally ready to deal harshly towards that country, and particularly in the inequality of reduction of taxation, he should always be ready to resist it.

Mr. *Robert Palmer* said, that, in common, he had no doubt with many Gentlemen who had heard him, he felt thankful to the noble Lord for the reduction which he proposed in the different taxes of the country; but there was one tax with regard to which he felt a good deal of anxiety, as he had presented several Petitions respecting it, and he was in hopes that some reduction might have been made in its amount; he meant the Malt-duty. The noble Lord said very truly, that it would be impossible to take off a tax amounting to upwards of 4,000,000*l.*, without substituting some other. He agreed with the noble Lord on that point; but at the same time he was disposed to concur with the hon. member for Middlesex and others in thinking, that by reducing a portion of the duty, the revenue would perhaps not be so much diminished as the country would be relieved. He hoped the noble Lord would take the subject into his serious consideration, and would, on a future opportunity, give the public the benefit of some reduction. With regard to the reduction of the duty on tiles, he thought that a very proper measure, and he hoped that the manufacturers of that article would feel grateful for the relief. With regard to the duty of 9,000*l.* which was to be taken off from bailiffs and overseers, he thought there might be other duties the removal of which would give greater relief. However, on the whole, he felt grateful to the noble Lord for what he proposed.

Mr. *Baring* said, that when the annual exposition of the financial condition of the country was made, the House was generally satisfied with the statement made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and was indisposed to pay attention to any further discussion of the subject; yet, as this was the only occasion upon which he should have an opportunity of making any observations upon the general system of finance of the country, he felt it necessary to trespass for a short time upon the notice of the House, while he made a few observations on that system, and added a few remarks upon some of the articles of taxation in which the noble Lord proposed to make a reduction. It had been his misfortune to differ in opinion from almost every Government since the restoration of peace in this country. On the return of peace there were amongst Statesmen two different views as to the course of financial policy which the Government ought to adopt. The one was that which was the most popular, and consequently the most attractive, to every Government, or rather, indeed, he might say, the most irresistible—namely, that of reducing the taxation of the country to the very utmost, reserving little or no surplus of income over expenditure; the other, the creating such a *bonâ fide* sinking fund as would enable the Government to effect, within a comparatively short period, such a diminution of the amount of the national debt as would permanently relieve the country. The former being by far the most popular, and indeed irresistible as a means to obtain a seat in Parliament, was, unfortunately, that followed by every administration, including the present, since the peace; the other he had ever held to be recommended by a wise policy—he meant the generating such habits of manly fortitude in the public mind—by pointing out to them the extent of the resources of the country, and the certainty of a permanent good being the result of a temporary inconvenience—as would induce the people to bear such additional pressure of taxation as, without impairing the national energies, would hold out the by no means distant prospect of an effective reduction in, and mastery over, the national debt. If this manly and wise policy had been acted on since the peace, they would now be in a situation that would enable them to reduce what taxes they pleased, while the pressure of the national debt would be as nothing relative to the national resources.

But, unfortunately, each administration had continued in the same unwise career, commenced in the peace; and at length the noble Lord following in the steps of his predecessors, had not only left little or no surplus as a sinking fund, but actually last year was in a deficit *quoad* the year's revenue. He, however, did not blame the noble Lord for pursuing a vicious course, so much in favour with Parliament and the public, though he could not help lamenting its baneful consequences. He would admit, moreover, to the noble Lord, that the surplus which the present system afforded, of a million, or a million and a half, would be of no practical use towards effecting that amount of reduction of the debt which he contended might have been made had the Legislature acted on a different system. He would also admit that every administration would have experienced great and all but insurmountable obstacles in enforcing a policy so opposed to popular prejudices. Indeed, he was confident that had he put forward his plan as a means to obtain a seat in Parliament, he should have got no constituency from the Land's-end to John o'Groat's that would have chosen him for their Representative. It was still, however, to be lamented that Ministers at the return of peace had not the wisdom and moral courage to oppose themselves to the popular prepossessions when doing so would have conduced to the public welfare. Had they acted upon his principles it was, and long had been, his firm conviction, that by inducing a manly fortitude in the public mind which would encourage the people to bear an additional amount of taxation, care being, of course, taken to regard economy in the public expenditure, they would by this time have mastered the debt, and have been able to look forward to a period not very distant of its complete extinction by terminable annuities. How different was their situation now, he need not say; if a mastery of the debt were pointed at, it was only by a violation of the public faith—a robbery of the national creditor; so that it should seem that there was no means, save a dishonest one, left them of effecting that beneficial reduction, which might easily have been made within the last fifteen or sixteen years by honesty and fortitude. He believed that much of the impolicy of the Legislature of which he was complaining arose from its undue appreciations of the resources of the country, and of the moral patriotism of its people. He was convinced that both might be safely relied upon for those additional burthens, which such an effective sinking fund as he contemplated would necessarily occasion. The war, long and expensive as it was, had not exhausted either our resources or our patriotism, and a wise statesman would have done his duty at the risk of the passing unpopularity. How different was the conduct of Mr. Pitt at the termination of the American war from that of Ministers at the peace of 1815! Never was there a war which ended more disastrously, as it was thought, to the national honour and interests. The spirit of the nation was prostrated; our colonies were severed from us; and it was thought universal ruin must ensue. Never was the country in a situation in which it had less to hope from the future; never were the energies of a great statesman more tasked to point out the remedy for the grievances of which the public complained, and to discharge it of its gloomy forebodings. Fortunately, Mr. Pitt was a great statesman; unlike his successors, he did not make popular prejudice his counsel; he consulted only his own conscience and the public welfare. For ten years, accordingly, after the termination of the American war, Mr. Pitt persisted in levying such additional taxes as would furnish him with a sinking fund sufficient to enable him to master the debt. Would that his wise example had been imitated by Ministers since the peace of 1815; how different would now be the condition of our national resources! Did hon. Members think his plan impracticable? Let them look at that barometer of the national resources—the money-market—at this moment, and then let them judge whether a wise Minister might not easily have applied those resources towards getting rid of the national debt. They were aware that, even as it was, a very considerable reduction had been made in the amount of the debt—that the five per cents had been reduced to four, and the four per cents to three and a-half. The noble Lord had not intimated any intention on the part of Ministers to further reduce these reduced four and three and a-half per cents, to three and a-half and three per cents, or to reduce the three per cents reduced to two and a-half per cent. And why had he not? Simply because he knew in the present state of the public credit—all owing to the want of an efficient sinking-fund system—that it would not be safe and hardly practicable to make such a reduction. He said, that this was owing to the non-sinking fund policy of late Administrations in not keeping up an effective sinking fund. He was prepared to prove it, and to show, that if a different system had been acted upon, there would be nothing to prevent the noble Lord from reducing the three per cents to two and a half, and to effect such reduction of taxes as he might think would be nationally advantageous. Hon. Members ignorant of the working of the money market might doubt the facility of reducing the three per cents. Facts would undeceive them. Money, as he was told, for he was not acquainted with the fact himself, was at present to be got at two per cent, and Exchequer Bills, the floating debt of the country, which paid an interest of two and a quarter per cent, bore a premium of three per cent; in other words, people were giving three per cent for that which paid an interest of two and a quarter per cent; while, at the same time, the three per cents, the permanent stock, were at a discount of thirteen per cent. Would any man tell him, that there was any other reason for this than the want of confidence in the public as to the power and the disposition of Parliament to master the debt? The value of the permanent stock was, undoubtedly, affected by the apprehension of war, but the apprehension of war acted upon it, because there was no sinking fund to meet the exigency, and to show, that the resources of the country were sufficient. Of course his arguments on the advantages of a sinking fund were based on the supposition that it would be a *boná fide* sinking fund, not less than 5,000,000*l.* per annum. Had such a fund been properly acted upon since the peace, they would now have reduced the debt one-sixth of its nominal amount, and still more the pressure of it, by being able to avail themselves of the state of the money-market in the reduction of the interest of stocks. With an efficient sinking fund, and money to be had in Lombard-street at two per cent, they might make every wholesome improvement in the public burthens. He did not, he repeated, impute the blame of the bad policy on which he had been commenting to the noble Lord or his colleagues; they merely sailed with the current which had borne their several predecessors before them. He gave the noble Lord and his colleagues full credit for the very efficient reductions which they had made in the several branches of the public expenditure. No man could hear with greater satisfaction than he did of the reductions in the expenditure which the Government had made and contemplated, and particularly those in the naval department under the right hon. Baronet, which were so conspicuous and important. Leaving the general view of the finances, he was ready to state, that he thought the noble Lord had disposed of his surplus as judiciously as he well could. He applied it to those purposes which were most essential to the interests of the country, and in the distribution of it showed as much impartiality as was possible. For the agricultural interests, the only real provision that he found in the noble Lord's statement was the removal of a small sum levied upon taxed carts; but he really thought it was impossible that 30,000*l.* could be laid out more advantageously than in removing this very vexatious tax. Undoubtedly he should have been glad, had circumstances admitted of it, to have seen some alteration of the Malt-tax. It was clear, however, that without a great change in something else, it would be impossible to effect that object, but he thought that a considerable reduction might be made in the Malt-tax, which would both relieve the manufacturer of the article, and give a great facility of enjoyment to those classes who did not go to the ale-house to drink their beer. He thought this might be done, and he wished the experiment had been tried, because he believed, that of all sources of revenue this was the one which was most likely to spring forth under any diminution of the tax. Indeed, the noble Lord had a proof of this, for he had said himself, that after the repeal of the Beer-duty, the produce of malt rose about 1,400,000*l.* If the noble Lord had risked some sacrifice in Malt-duty, and if he made inquiries whether the reduction might not have been better partitioned between beer and malt, he thought some plan of that kind might have had a good effect for the country. While he approved of the proposed reduction of the duty on soap, as calculated to promote the morals and comforts of the people, as well as the interests of the manufactures in which the article was used, he still thought, that the noble Lord might have advantageously reduced the whole duty on soap (by which means that mass of fraud in the trade in soap between this country and Ireland would be extinguished), and make up the loss by a duty on foreign tallow imported. With respect to Ireland he would only say, that in common with every English gentleman, he felt towards it as he did towards any particular English county or district, and in this feeling of a common interest—one empire, one great united people, he would assimilate altogether the revenue laws of the two countries, so as to put an end to even fiscal distinctions. No part of the noble Lord's plan had given him more unmixed satisfaction than his proposed reduction of the duty on raw cotton. With the reasoning of the noble Lord in defence of that reduction he entirely concurred. The noble Lord was perfectly correct in saying, that we should anticipate the possibility of foreign competition in the manufactured article, and not defer the repealing the duty on the raw article till the foreigner had insinuated himself into the general market. He had taken the liberty of addressing the House upon that subject year after year, as he considered it the most dangerous tax we could have imposed; and, as the noble Lord said we were never aware of the danger until it was past, he would therefore advise the noble Lord to watch carefully the remaining duty. He would beg to suggest to the noble Lord, whether it might not be possible to give a drawback by weight upon cotton yarns exported, equal to the tax. He was aware, that it would be attended with some difficulty; but if a tax were imposed upon cotton goods consumed in this kingdom, he conceived, that it would be one of the most just taxes that could be imposed, and would be the means of removing the remainder of the duty that existed on the raw material. As the noble Lord proposed that the duty should be a fixed duty on weight, he would suggest the propriety of a drawback on cotton-yarns on the same principle of weight. These reductions, however, he admitted, should be made with great caution. In the present unsettled state of the Bank Charter, and in the face of two great experiments which Ministers contemplated in the China trade, and in the West-Indian colonies, the noble Lord could not too cautiously guard against impairing the public credit by rash curtailments of the public revenue. With respect to the suggestion of a tax upon the public creditor, he begged leave to offer one or two observations. He was convinced that it was conceived that a tax upon the fundholder was just and honest in principle, and he took it for granted, that it was proposed with a view to taxing the rich instead of the poor. That was the avowed object of the tax. The question was, would it be a tax upon the rich to the exemption of the poor? He was prepared to show, that it would not, and that it would be to all intents and purposes a tax on the middle classes, by which the rich, as a body, would not be in the least affected. A paper had been laid on the table, which furnished him with the means of proving this proposition; it was a list of the number of claimants on the Bank books for dividends on the public stock. He had taken the trouble of making such a division of the list of those claimants as would greatly facilitate their arriving at a proper conclusion; he divided those dividends which were received by corporations or trustees from those which were received by individuals, the former evidently not coming under the head of private or individual property; and he further divided the fundholders according to the amounts of dividends received by them. The House could hardly anticipate the result. There were 279,500 accounts on the Bank public-fund-book. Of these the House would be surprised to hear that not more than seventy-one persons received dividends (half-yearly) of and above 2,000*l*. There were in addition 113 corporate bodies who received dividends also of 2,000*l*., and upwards—but only seventy-one individuals. What, on the other hand, would the House say, when he told them that not less than 263,000 out of the total of 279,500 persons interested in the National Debt received dividends of which 200*l*. was the *maximum*; and if to this number they added the 250,000 holders of property in savings' banks, they would have a total of 540,000 individuals interested in the maintenance of public credit, and dependent upon public faith. A tax on the fundholder, then, would not be a tax on large fortunes, but a plundering of the middle and poorer classes of society. Now, although he did not say, that there were any Gentlemen in that House who would argue that, because persons possessed large property they might be plundered, yet if any persons were actuated by such a feeling, it was proper they should know how few there were possessing property in the public funds who were so situated. He had only to say, in conclusion, that he never listened to an English budget without feelings of melancholy and disgust at the erroneous principle on which they seemed to him to be founded. He must again repeat, that he meant no imputation upon the present Government. He only wished that the country had better feelings on the subject, and he had no doubt, that would be the case if former Governments had made it their study to rouse them and encourage those exertions, which though of temporary inconvenience would ultimately promote the public welfare.

Mr. Alderman *Thompson* was much pleased that a reduction in marine insurances was proposed—a measure the propriety of which he had long pressed on the notice of the noble Lord. At the same time he hoped the principle would be carried much further, which could safely be done without any injury whatever to the revenue. He should take the liberty of forwarding some documents to the noble Lord, which he was sure would satisfy his mind of the truth of what he stated. He thought, too, that the noble Lord should have equalised the Soap duty, and had he done so, he would have prevented a great deal of smuggling, and by the consequent saving he might have altogether removed the taxes upon houses. He wished such a course had been pursued, because he must say, that he was no admirer of partial reductions. The continuance of the House-duty was made the means of much abuse. Only the very day before the election for the borough of Sunderland, there were surcharges made upon all the householders there, who were so much alarmed, that there was great difficulty in getting them to excercise their elective franchise. He should have been glad to see the whole of the House duty repealed, especially with regard to the lower class of householders. There was another tax which he should have been glad to see reduced—he meant the duty upon fire insurances. If that had been reduced by one half, it would be a most extensive advantage to the public. He was glad that the duty upon shopmen and porters, and inferior servants, was reduced — the more so, as he knew those taxes had frequently been made the means of making most improper surcharges. On the whole, he congratulated the country upon the reduction which had taken place, though he should have been pleased to see it extended to other objects.

Mr. *Robinson* said, it must be exceedingly consolatory to the country to know that the income of the last year had exceeded the expectations of the noble Lord opposite. But one observation arose upon it which he should like to see adopted. The noble Lord said, he had a surplus of above 500,000*l.* which ought also to be applied in reduction of taxes. That was the principle he should wish to press on the attention of the Government. He was sorry to see, that there was not one instance of a tax being altogether abolished. The machinery, therefore, for collecting all the taxes, would still remain as the taxes were only reduced. If an opposite course had been pursued, the reductions might even have been greater than they were. With regard to the House and Window tax, on which the public entertained a very strong opinion, he agreed with several hon. Gentlemen that his Majesty's Government would have to contend with extreme vexation and difficulty in making the alteration with respect to shops. He could not, certainly, concur in the propriety of continuing that unequal system of taxing houses, which had been the subject of so much just complaint. The houses of the nobility and gentry were, comparatively speaking, not taxed at all. Why did not the noble Lord equalize the system altogether, and impose this tax more fairly according to the value of property? The hon. member for Essex would excuse him if he referred for one moment to an observation of his—for he was considered so great an authority on subjects of this kind, that he was unwilling that the observation to which he was about to allude should pass unnoticed. Instead of congratulating the noble Lord, as he was willing to do, on the reductions he had already effected, the hon. member for Essex rather called upon him to forego any further exertions in this respect. The hon. Member said, that, "at the close of the American war, instead of the Government of the day reducing the taxation of the country; for ten years succeeding that period, Mr. Pitt continued to impose new taxes upon the people." Yes; but the hon. member for Essex would allow him to say, that, at the close of the American war the whole amount of the public debt was 238,000,000*l.*; whereas, at the close of the last French war, it amounted to 930,000,000*l.* He could tell the hon. member for Essex, who seemed to think so sanguinely of the resources of this country, that if ever he should be Chancellor of the Exchequer, it would not be in his power, nor in the power of any Administration with whom he might connect himself, to act upon the principle of levying taxes for the purpose of maintaining a sinking fund. It was absolutely impracticable. The hon. Gentleman taunted all former Governments with having weakly acceded and listened to the complaints of the people on the subject of taxation. But the fact was, that no former Government ever gave up any tax, until it was found to be so oppressive upon the productive industry of the working classes, that it could be no longer maintained. The hon. member for Essex, and every other hon. Gentleman must know that such were the diminished resources of the people—whether connected with trade, agriculture, commerce, or manufacture—that it was quite out of the power of any Government to maintain a sinking fund; and, if any Government could succeed in maintaining the present system of taxation, he believed it could only be done by an improved and more equal distribution. The right hon. Baronet, the member for Tamworth asked, "Would you impose an inquisitorial income-tax upon the country?" God forbid! that any man should impose an Income-tax, or a Property-tax, on this country—except, indeed, in a case of absolute necessity. But that necessity actually existed; and he told the right hon. Baronet, when he objected to the inquisitorial character of an Income-tax, that when it was put in comparison with the misery of the working classes, occasioned by indirect oppressive taxation, the latter was by far the greater evil, and might be ultimately much greater to those who had property, than an Income-tax. He gave credit to the Government for the reductions which they had made, and which amounted altogether to between 3,000,000*l.* and 4,000,000*l.* a-year. He thought the reductions might have been better had they been more directed to the relief of the productive industry of the country; and he was afraid that if nothing was done to mend the condition of the labouring classes, from whom all the wealth of the country flowed, there would not result all the advantage that every one must desire to see from the reductions that had been made.

Mr. *Slaney* hoped that the Government would continue to pursue the same course as that which they had now adopted. If they did this, and if the people saw that there really was a sincere wish to improve their condition, they would wait with patience, and enable the Government, consistently with good faith to the public creditor, to reduce the burthens of the country. There was one subject, with respect to which he wished to make one observation—it was that of the complaints about the inequality of the assessments upon large houses. The statements made on this subject were, he believed, founded in a great mistake. The statement was founded on the amount expended in the building and ornamenting of these houses, and not upon their real value, or the sum for which they could be let. A house in Fleet-street, one fourth of the size of one of these large houses in a distant part of the country, was, in fact, worth much more than such a house, and would probably let for four times as much, although it had not cost near so much in building and ornamenting it. The hon. member for Worcester, whose observations had induced him to make this remark, seemed to assent to the principle he had thus stated, and of its truth he was perfectly convinced. There was one point to which he wished to call the attention of the noble Lord and of the House. The noble Lord had reduced the tax upon porters and shopmen, but he feared that, in the words in which that reduction was effected, working maltsters, or those who superintended the buildings where malt was made, would not be deemed to be included. He thought that the reduction ought to be distinctly extended to them, since not only did the state of the trade demand some relief, but the fact ought to be remembered that they were persons working upon an article that was itself afterwards made the subject of heavy taxation. If this was done, he could assure the noble Lord that the reduction would be received with great gratitude by the maltsters throughout the country. He was happy to be able to say, that the reductions now made met with his approbation, and he hoped they would be received in the same manner by the people at large.

Sir *Thomas Freemantle* could not forbear expressing his wish, that when the noble Lord reduced the duty on marine insurances, he had reduced the duty on fire insurances, especially with respect to agricultural produce. The duty on fire insurances amounted to twice the sum paid for the insurance. The agricultural interest deserved some relief, and this would have been particularly useful, as anybody must be convinced, when it was recollected that agricultural produce, often lying at some distance from the house, was peculiarly open to depredation, and, as the unhappy instances of past years had proved, was often made the subject of depredation. This reduction was the more desirable, since that which had been said to take place with regard to marine insurances equally happened with regard to fire insurances; many policies were now, in consequence of the high rate of the duty here, effected in Paris upon houses in this country, all of which would be effected in this country, but for that circumstance. He should have been glad, too, to see the malt duty reduced, but as a Chancellor of the Exchequer always fully made up his mind before he came down to the House with the Budget, and as an humble individual like himself was not likely to be able to change the decision of the Government, he supposed he must look at the reduction as hopeless in this Session of Parliament. He agreed with the hon. member for Berkshire, in expressing his regret, that while above a million of taxes had been reduced, the agricultural interest had only been allowed the benefit of a paltry 30,000*l.*, for that was, he believed, the amount of the duty on taxed carts. He thought that the statement of the noble Lord afforded the most gratifying prospects, the more especially, as the present improved state of the revenue did not arise from the increase of taxation, but from a reduction of expenditure. He gave every credit to the Government for this reduction. He believed that the people were now satisfied of the wish of that House to relieve them from the burthen of taxation which pressed so heavily upon them. But there was one other matter to which they now wished the House to direct their attention, and that was the subject of local taxation. They complained most bitterly of local taxes, the amount of which was so considerable. A sum of 45,000,000*l.* was taken from them most unavoidably by the noble Lord, and a sum equal to one-fifth of that amount, or 9,000,000*l.* a-year, was taken from them by local taxes. The House ought to take this subject into their consideration; and he thought they could not do anything better than begin as speedily as possible, to see how the amount of this local taxation might be reduced, and the abuses connected with it remedied.

Mr. *Halcomb* was sorry that the Window-tax had not been repealed, because it operated to produce a bad system of building, and injured the health and the comfort of all classes of people. A distinction was now made between the House and Window duty, but in effect they were the same. He thought there ought to be a new calculation of the duty, and that whatever was taken ought to be taken as a duty on houses, and should be calculated on their rental.

Lord *Althorp* said, that he should not detain the House for any length of time; but he wished to make a few observations in answer to the remarks which had been made by different Gentlemen. The mode in which the statement he had made had been received by the House was most gratifying to him. He was quite aware from the first, that Gentlemen would differ from him on some of the topics which he had introduced; but the general mode in which his statement had been received, was, he repeated, most gratifying. He should begin his observations with an answer to a question put by the hon. Gentleman near him, as to the maltsters, or persons employed in superintending the making of malt. It seemed to him that there could be no doubt that such persons would come within the description of shopmen or other persons, who were now no longer to be made the subject of taxation. The hon. member for Middlesex seemed to think that the arrangement with respect to advertisements was not what it should be; he had said, that the duty ought to have been reduced in the first instance to a fixed sum. He did not think that the difference between them was considerable, and he believed that the arrangement, as it now stood, would be a great relief to advertisers. It had been said, that the reductions he had made were very small. He admitted that the reduction was small for this year; but in making that observation, they ought to recollect in what a short period of time he had been called on to make this reduction, and on what a small amount of disposable revenue he had to operate. Hon. Gentlemen must recollect how large a portion of the public taxes was required for the payment of the debt; and how small a portion, therefore, was left for reduction. His right hon. predecessor had reduced four millions, and when he came into office he reduced, in the first year, taxes to the amount of 1,800,000*l.* He now proposed to reduce 1,300,000*l.*, so that he thought he deserved the credit of endeavouring to apply the principle of reduction as far as it was possible to be applied at the present moment. He was quite sure, from the effect of the reductions that had already been carried into operation, that the reductions which he now proposed would produce a considerable effect in relieving the country. The right hon. Gentleman opposite had compared this reduction with others, and seemed to consider that it was not of a satisfactory kind, because, as he supposed, it was a reduction made upon a falling revenue. He must deny that it was made upon a falling revenue. The apparent difference, on which the right hon. Gentleman founded his statement, was occasioned by the Candle duty, which had not been wholly taken off last year, and which now being altogether repealed, made the revenue seem less in comparison; but the fact was, that the revenue, so far from being a falling, was an improving revenue. Of all the observations which had been made upon his statement, that which most surprised him was one made by the hon. Alderman opposite, with regard to the duty on insurance; for the plan which he had proposed was actually founded upon a memorial from Lloyd's, in which the name of the hon. Alderman was put; and when he stated, that he believed it would be satisfactory, he alluded to that very memorial. The hon. and learned member for Dublin had complained that, in what he had proposed, he haddone nothing to reduce taxes in Ireland. He did not admit that statement. Some of the taxes he had reduced did affect Ireland. The hon. and learned Gentleman himself had admitted that the duty on soap affected Ireland; and, besides this, he intended to do what he could to remedy the defects relating to the drawbacks. Then, again, he had removed a part of the duty on raw cotton; and the hon. and learned Member knew that there was a cotton trade in Ireland which must receive a benefit from the change. Then there was the duty on insurances, which, he admitted, did not affect Ireland much, but still it was an item in the amount of benefit. It was true, that the tax on glass and on paper might have been reduced, but it did appear to him, though the House was perfectly well aware of his desire to reduce the duty on glass, yet, on this occasion, he had thought the relief he should give by other reductions, would be more sensibly and immediately felt. The tax on printed calicoes, which he had taken off in the year 1831, had been a great relief to Ireland. He was sorry he could not do more for Ireland, for he was convinced that this country could not lay out its money to greater advantage than in relieving and improving the industry of that country. He had, however, no great opportunity of making further reductions in the present state of the taxation of the country. A regret had been expressed that he had not reduced the duty on fire insurances, especially with respect to agricultural property. It certainly was a subject well worthy of consideration. But he did not see how it was possible to reduce the taxes on agricultural property generally; and he had not thought it advisable to make that the object of his particular selection. It was now stated, that the duty on fire insurances amounted to 200 per cent. It would have been useless to make any but a large reduction in a duty of that kind [*several Members*, "*reduce it one half!*"] Well, one half. What would be the consequence of that? Why, that persons would be paying 100 per cent more than the risk was worth [" *they now pay* 200 *per cent!*"] True; but he mentioned this to show that he should not, even by that reduction, be conferring a great benefit on the people. But, let the House look at it in another point of view. The loss to the revenue would be nearly 400,000*l.* a-year. Did they think that that sum could be taken from the revenue, in the shape of a reduced duty on fire insurances, with more advantage than in the shape of the reductions he had already effected. With regard to the duty on shop windows, it had been said that the reduction would be open to some dispute as to the mode of ascertaining it. He admitted that there might be some difficulty in the matter, but he hoped that it would not give rise to all the inconvenience that was expected. The hon. Member opposite, the member for Essex, had charged him with being adverse to keeping up the amount of the revenue with a view to an annual surplus for the purpose of reducing the national debt. To such a charge he was perfectly ready to plead guilty, for, whether in office or in opposition, he had always been an enemy to keeping the taxes at a high point for the sake of a surplus revenue. He could by no means agree with those who thought the non-redemption of the public debt was any evidence of the exhaustion of the resources of the country. In the affairs of private life, men entitled and enabled to redeem an annuity seldom did so while they had any possible mode of employing their capital otherwise; and, speaking generally, that which was true of the individual held good with regard to the nation. The hon. member for Essex had also endeavoured to show, that the public debt must have been grossly mismanaged, because the public was now under the necessity of paying three per cent for money, while it was to be had in Lombard-street for two per cent; but the House should remember that money was only to be had at that low rate upon short dates; and the fact that the debt of the State bore the higher rate of interest was no proof of any lack of public credit or confidence. On the subject of surplus revenue, he should only make this remark, that its abuse had not by any means the effect of lowering the funds. He frankly acknowledged he was one of those who did look forward to a very considerable reduction of the public debt by its conversion into terminable annuities; but he could not bring himself to believe that the work of reduction could be advantageously effected by any sacrifice of income in the present condition of the country.

Lord *Sandon* regretted that some of the present Stamp duties which were found to be highly inconvenient in their operation, and towards certain classes of tradespeople most unjust and oppressive, had not been removed. He therefore desired to call the attention of the noble Lord the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to the subject, in the hope that some useful modification might be adopted. While he complained on this score he must express his satisfaction at the reduction which the noble Lord proposed in the duty on cotton.

Mr. *Sinclair* felt persuaded, that if the present system was to be persevered in, his noble friend had carried reductions as far as was practicable, and had also evinced a sound discrimination in the selection of the taxes which he proposed to modify. But he was, nevertheless, persuaded, that the statement of that evening would be received throughout the country with feelings of disappointment and regret. The people expected, and were entitled to a far larger measure of relief than it was now intended to bestow. What would they say if this were to be the only result of that reform which they mainly owed to their own firmness? Of what consequence was it to the working or middling classes whether Gatton and Old Sarum, or Leeds and Manchester, were represented, or whether any places were represented at all, if their sufferings were not alleviated, and their grievances redressed? The feelings of the people could not be trifled with. It was the general opinion throughout the country that the National Debt was the root of all the national sufferings—and it could not be maintained much longer at its present amount. The hon. member for Essex had pointed out how the interest might have been reduced if a different system had been adopted thirty years ago; but the question was, what could be done now? He was persuaded that the only practicable course would be, to impose a tax on every species of property for reducing, in whole or in part, the principal of the Debt, and enabling the Government to take off the taxes, by which the interest of that Debt was defrayed. Unless the rich were prepared to make great sacrifices for the relief of the poor, he anticipated that the general discontent would reach its height, and be productive of convulsion—if not of revolution.

Lord *Althorp* said, it was perhaps not impossible that some alteration could be effected which would meet the views of the noble Lord opposite, at least so far as the smaller Stamp duties were concerned.

Mr. *Slaney* said, that in this country the humbler classes laboured under the disadvantage of meeting an almost insurmountable obstacle whenever they sought to acquire property in land, owing to the difficulty of making out titles; and in a variety of instances, where great public improvements might otherwise be effected they were stopped short from the difficulties which presented themselves in the way of making out titles. He trusted, therefore, that the subject would receive the immediate and attentive consideration of his Majesty's Government

Mr. *Ewart* complained of the duty on Almanacks. The whole produce of that duty did not amount to more than 27,000*l.* per annum; and for the sake of that comparatively small sum the country was subjected to a most mischievous tax. The effect of the tax was, to create a monopoly in favour of a few great capitalists, and thus, in the absence of proper and beneficial competition, the grossest errors crept into publications, which, to be at all useful, ought to be scrupulously correct. At present one effect of the tax was, the publication of Almanacks in the Isle of Man, where there was no duty chargeable, and their importation into England full of the errors which they might naturally be expected to contain when published under such circumstances.

Mr. *Charles Kemyss Tynte* was bound, in duty to his constituents and to the public, to call the attention of the noble Lord (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) to a tax which was felt as most oppressive to the county which he had the honour to represent. He alluded to the Personal Estate Tax. He merely had to state that the county of Somerset paid 445*l.* 15*s.* annually to that tax; Devonshire paid 685*l.*; whilst Essex only paid 1*l.*—to show the partiality and injustice of this tax. He called upon the hon. member for Norfolk to support him, for that county paid alone 841*l.* to this tax. He trusted the noble Lord would take the partiality of this tax into consideration, and totally repeal it.

Resolution agreed to; and the House resumed.

PAYMENT OF DEBTS.] Mr. *John Romilly* moved the second reading of the Payment of Debts' Bill. As the law at present stood, a man possessed of 10,000*l.* a-year landed property might die in debt—say a year's income; but if he left no personal property, his creditors would be deprived of their just rights; or, at any rate, be dependent upon the precarious sense of justice of the successor. A man left trustee of personal property, and investing this in land, if he died, that property then came to the heir-at-law, and the real owners might be made beggars. This was not a case, perhaps, of common occurrence, any more than parricide; but there ought to be provisions against every sort of offence and fraud. For this end, it would not be necessary to make any very great alterations in the existing laws; and before giving his plan, he would cite the authority of a learned Judge, who, whatever fault had been found with him, was indisputably one of the greatest and most enlightened Judges that had ever sat on the Bench—he meant Lord Mansfield. That great man said, "that every honest man should make a charge on his estate in his will, to provide for the payment of his debts; and he who did not so, might be said to sin in his grave." The object of the present alteration in the law was, to make it imperative on all persons to make this provision for the payment of their debts. He was sorry to say, that a bill, similar to this, had already been five times introduced to the consideration of the Legislature; but hitherto without success. Four times it had passed that House; but as many times it had been rejected by the Lords. The first was introduced by an eminent lawyer in 1792. It passed this House, but was rejected in the other. The second was introduced in 1806, and was rejected in this House by a majority of two to one: the three other bills were introduced in the years 1814, 1815, and 1816, were all passed by this House, and all rejected by the House of Lords. The great objection to all these previous bills was, that they drew a distinction between freehold and copyhold property. That objection was removed in the present, and, therefore, he owned, he entertained a very confident expectation that it would meet with the approbation of both Houses. When the Bill was last rejected in the House of Lords, a noble Lord entered his protest against its rejection in terms which expressed so clearly the grounds upon which he thought such a measure should be passed, that he did not know that he could conclude better than by stating to the House the substance of that protest:—"It is highly inexpedient and unjust, that persons who have contracted debts, and have the means of paying them, should be allowed at their deaths to transmit to their heirs or their devisees the secure enjoyment of their property, while by the non-performance of their engagements, their unsatisfied creditors may be reduced to bankruptcy and ruin."* That protest was signed "Grey." He begged leave to move that the Bill be read a second time.

The Bill read a second time.

Dover Election.] Mr. *Halcomb* rose to move to be allowed time to deposit a particular of his qualification to be returned as a Member of the House, as required by a standing order of this House, dated 21st November, 1717, with the proper officer, till Monday next. He stated that having already complied substantially with the Standing Order, by handing in a full particular of his qualification to the clerk on taking his seat, he trusted the House would extend its indulgence to him for a single day. His failure to furnish the required document on the petition against him was entirely owing to misconception and accident. The fifteen days expired on the day before Good Friday; and as it was not expected that the House would sit upon that day, he had been thrown off his guard, and having received a sudden and pressing summons to go to Warwick, on the Wednesday he left town, and the matter escaped his memory. In conclusion he again threw himself on the indulgence of the House, to deal with him as it might see fit. He wished to be allowed to deliver a paper containing his qualification to the Clerk of the House on Monday.

Mr. *Wynn* must observe, that the indulgence requested was very unusual, and, he might say unprecedented; and, as he knew of no precedent precisely similar, he would recommend the adjournment of the debate upon the subject to search for precedents. The right hon. Gentleman concluded, by moving, as an Amendment, that the further debate on the subject be adjourned until Monday next.

The House divided on the Amendment: Ayes 46;—Noes 54;—Majority 8.

The discussion on the original Question was resumed.

Mr. *Wynn* said, that the Committee which would have to try the Petition would not be bound by the Standing Order of the House, but by the provisions of the Act of Parliament; and must see that the hon. Member had complied with the latter. He was disposed to give his vote in favour of the extension of time sought for by the hon. and learned Member.

Mr. *Murray* contended, that no sufficient grounds had been shown why the Standing Order should not be enforced. If the House had hitherto observed the Standing Order, it should continue to do so.

Mr. *Philip Howard* contended, that in the case of the Marylebone Election, the House had, but a few days ago, decided against an extension of the time. He had heard nothing to convince him that the two cases were not, as nearly as possible, similar. The hon. member for Marylebone might well complain of being harshly treated. if this indulgence were granted at the suit of the member for Dover, which, in like circumstances, was denied to him, when the House, by a large majority, came to the resolution of abiding by its own standing order. He (Mr. Howard) moreover, thought, that they would be doing a great injustice to the petitioners, who were not present to defend themselves, if further time were granted in the present instance. Every consideration of consistency and of equity compelled him to oppose the Motion of the hon. Member.

The *Speaker* said, that the non-compliance with the Standing Order was a question entirely between that House and the sitting Member. The petition under all circumstances, must go before the Committee, and they would have to decide on the allegations made in it. It was for the Committee to decide on the question of qualification or no qualification. If the petitioners should think themselves prejudiced in any way by the Standing Order not having been complied with, they could appeal to that House, who would deal with the infraction of the Order as they should think fit.

The House divided—Ayes 36; Noes 54: Majority 18.

HOUSE OF LORDS,
Saturday, April 20, 1833.

Minutes.] Bills. Royal Assent given by Commission to the following Bills:—Mutiny; Marine Mutiny.—Read a third time:—Privy Council; Indemnity; Seamen's Hospital Society.

Petitions presented. By the Earl of Shaftesbury, from the Dissenters of Dorchester, against Slavery.

HOUSE OF LORDS,
Monday, April 22, 1833.

Minutes.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of the Duke of Richmond, an Account of all Sums paid out of the Consolidated Fund for Fees in both Houses of Parliament, for all Bills for Continuing or Amending any Acts concerning Turnpike Roads, from 27th February, 1829, to the present time.—On the Motion of the Marquess of CLANRICARDE, an Account of all Ecclesiastical Property vested in the Crown, in Pursuance of the Irish Statute, 6th Anne, cap. 6.

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* Hansard, xxxiv. p. 1151.

Petitions presented. By the Duke of GORDON, from the University of Aberdeen, for a Revision of the Apothecaries Act.—By Lord DE DUNSTANVILLE, from Roseland, to make Truro the Assize Town instead of Launceston.—By the Earl of RADNOR, from St. George's, Middlesex,—for a Repeal of the Septennial Act, Vote by Ballot, and a Repeal of the Assessed Taxes.—By Lord GRANTHAM, from St. James's, Westminster, against the Assessed Taxes.—By the Earl of RODEN, from Bewdley; and by a NOBLE LORD, from two Places,—against the Sale of Beer Act.—By the Earl of ROSEBERY, from Haddington, against the present System of Church Patronage in Scotland, and from the same Place, for an Alteration in the Forms and Practice of the Scotch Law Courts.—By the Earl of HADDINGTON, from the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale, against the New System of Education in Ireland.—By the Bishops of BANGOR, LINCOLN, GLOUCESTER, Lord REDESDALE, and the Earl of RODEN, from a Number of Places,—for the Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By the Duke of RICHMOND, the Marquess of LANSDOWNE, the Earls of RADNOR, UXBRIDGE, CLARENDON, GREY, RODEN, and ALBEMARLE, Viscount MELBOURNE, Lords ROLLE, DACRE, POLTIMORE, SUFFIELD, GRANTHAM, and DINORBEN, and by the Bishop of LINCOLN, from a great Number of Places,—against Slavery.—By Earl GREY, from Devonport and Stonehouse, for Emancipating the Jews.—By the Archbishop of DUBLIN, from the Clergy of Kildare and Cork, against the proposed Measure of Church Reform for Ireland.

COLONIAL SLAVERY—RETURNS.] Lord *Suffield* said, he was about to move for a certain paper which he thought would be very interesting and important to their Lordships. It had been announced in the other House of Parliament by a member of the Government, that the Government were about to introduce such a measure regarding the state of Slavery in the Colonies as would permanently settle that question. That announcement had given great satisfaction throughout the country, and meetings had, in consequence, been held in various places on the subject. Not only that, but a deputation, consisting of 339 gentlemen had been sent up from all parts of the country to wait upon Earl Grey and the Government, who presented a memorial on the subject to Earl Grey on Friday last. That memorial had much in it which he thought might be valuable to their Lordships, and he should therefore beg leave to move that "An humble address be presented to his Majesty, that he might be graciously pleased to lay before the House a copy of the resolution and memorial presented to Earl Grey on Friday last, the 19th instant, by a deputation of gentlemen from various parts of the kingdom." He (Lord Suffield) believed it to be an unprecedented circumstance, that so many gentlemen should come up to London at great expense and trouble to themselves for the purpose of memorialising Government, and the circumstance showed the strong feeling entertained in the country as to the necessity of settling the question. He would take the opportunity of saying, that the memorial in question had not emanated from the London Anti-Slavery Society, and that not one member of that society was on the Deputation, with the exception of the gentleman who introduced it to the noble Lord.

Earl *Grey* said, that as far as he was concerned he had no objection to the production of the document. His only doubt was as to the form in which it could be called for. It was a memorial addressed to him, in common with others of his Majesty's Ministers, and he doubted whether it could be considered such a public document as their Lordships could move for by address to the Crown. He would admit, that the deputation was a most respectable one, and that the memorial was very ably drawn up. That, however, did not alter the question, whether they could call by address for a document which might be considered in the light of a private and not a public document. The calling for it in this way might establish a very inconvenient precedent. However, he had no objection to lay it before the House as a private document if it could be consistently produced.

Lord *Rolle* had no objection to the production of any document on the subject. His great wish, as an owner of West India property, was, that the slaves should be placed in a situation of comfort and happiness. He could say of his own slaves that they had always cost him a considerable sum, and their happiness was shown by the circumstance that they had increased from 130, to near 400.

Lord *Rosslyn* considered the document to be a private one. They might as well call for the production of a private letter addressed to any of their Lordships. It was quite impossible it could be asked for by means of an address to the Crown.

Lord *Suffield* contended, that if any document could be called a public one, it was that for which he moved. It was a memorial presented by 339 persons in an official meeting to the Ministers of the Crown.

The Marquess of *Lansdowne* had no objection to the production of the memorial but he doubted whether it could be called for by an address, or by an order of that House. The noble Lord might obtain it by an understanding among their Lordships, but it was clearly impossible that it could be asked by an address from the Crown.

Lord *Ellenborough* contended that the Motion would establish a dangerous and very inconvenient precedent.

The Motion negatived.

STAFFORD BRIBERY BILL.] The Earl of *Radnor*, in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said that he scarcely expected any opposition to it, because it was founded on the same principle as several Bills which had of late years been introduced without any objection into their Lordships' House for the purpose of indemnifying witnesses who might give evidence of the existence of gross bribery and corruption in certain boroughs. He admitted, that the present measure was not accompanied, like those to which he had just referred, by a proposition of disfranchisement; but their Lordships ought not on that account to reject it. The Bill was founded on the notoriety of gross and abominable bribery existing in Stafford. He understood that at the last election there were three candidates for the representation of that borough, and that the return of one of the successful candidates was petitioned against on the allegation of bribery. He had, however, good reason for believing that this proceeding was a mere *ruse de guerre*, for the purpose of getting some portion of the defeated candidates expenses paid. He knew that, on a former occasion, a gentleman who started for the representation of Stafford with every prospect of success up to the day before the election commenced,—having received promises of support from more than two-thirds of the voters,—was, notwithstanding defeated by an individual not at all connected with the place. The reason of this was, that this last gentleman had 14,000*l.* to spend in the election, while the other candidate could only spare 6,500*l.*; and it was actually a fact that the voters in the interest of the more wealthy candidate went to the poll with bank notes in their hats; and taunted their opponents with receiving only Birmingham counterfeits, while they got real bank notes. A petition was presented against the successful candidate, but upon his agreeing to pay down 3,000*l.* all further investigation was stifled. This having occurred on a former occasion he could not but think that something of the same sort was intended on the present occasion. Be that as it might, after the presentation of the petition now before the other House, two gentlemen, who had been engaged in the election, called on Mr. Ellice, with whom the present Bill originated, and stated that out of 526 electors who voted for one of the successful candidates, 524 received bribes of money. Those gentlemen, in corroboration of their statements, produced several money tickets which had been presented to the voters, and he held in his hand a further proof of the truth of their representation; which was nothing else than the poll-book of the voters in favour of the successful candidate, and he found only two names out of 526 to which the letters "p—d" were not attached. He conceived at first that these letters were put down to signify "polled," but on turning to the beginning of the book he found the word "paid" written in full, and in some parts of it the sums actually paid—sometimes 10*l.*, at others 12*l.*—were entered. This was such an abominable case of bribery and corruption, that it behoved their Lordships not to refuse dealing with it; and he could not help thinking that they would not be acting wisely or with graciousness towards the House of Commons if they did not assist in eradicating this evil. He had documents in his possession, which showed that all parties agreed as to the necessity of rooting out this system of corruption, and disfranchising the borough. The noble Earl read certain resolutions, agreed to by a number of gentlemen in Stafford, admitting the prevalence of the grossest system of bribery in that borough: and an extract from a letter written by the mayor, who was returning officer of the borough, in which it was stated that bribery had been so long practised in the place that it had almost assumed the character of a prescriptive right. The letter concluded by stating that the borough exhibited manifest symptoms of its political death, and that the sooner it was dead and buried the better, provided the cost was not great to the chief mourners. He stated these facts for the purpose of showing that the corruption and bribery of Stafford was notorious, and of such a gross nature as required some remedy to be applied to it. He understood several of their Lordships felt objections to the wording of particular parts of the Bill; but that was matter for consideration in Committee, and ought not to be any obstacle to the Second Reading. As far as he was concerned, he should offer no opposition to any amendment which did not interfere with the principle and efficiency of the measure. The noble Earl moved the Second Reading of the Bill.

Lord *Wynford* said that, whenever corruption was clearly proved against a considerable portion of the inhabitants of any place, he should be ready to concur in the proposition to disfranchise them and transfer the elective franchise to other persons more likely to exercise it properly. But the noble Earl's speech from the beginning to the end had convinced him that it was impossible for their Lordships to pass the present measure. He objected to this Bill, because it was not like former Bills of a similar nature founded on an inquiry previously instituted by the House of Commons. They were asked by the Bill to declare that the borough of Stafford was grossly corrupt. In his opinion the same character might justly be given to nine-tenths of the boroughs in England; and he had always expected that this would be the case when the elective franchise was given to that class of persons to whom votes were of no value, unless they were permitted to sell them. He always thought that the effect of the Reform Bill would be to put up to sale the representation of the country, and that expectation had been confirmed by what had passed at the late election; but, while he was ready to admit that nine boroughs out of ten throughout England were corrupt, he was not sure that Stafford was not the virtuous exception, and he was, therefore, not prepared to give his assent to the preamble of this Bill, without having its allegations proved by evidence. Assuming the fact that there had been bribery at Stafford there was one part of the Bill which he considered obnoxious to very serious objections; it offered indemnity not only to those who gave evidence, but also to every person who was implicated in the corrupt transactions of the borough. It indemnified the great criminal who had bribed, as well as the pauper who had been bribed. In all former cases their Lordships had had a Report of a Committee to act upon, which pointed out that bribery had been practised, and also pointed out the proper persons to admit as witnesses, and consequently to include in the Bill of Indemnity. If they proceeded without such an inquiry they would shake one of the most useful principles which guided their Lordships proceedings. Under these circumstances he would suggest the propriety of appointing a secret Committee up-stairs to inquire whether any bribery had prevailed at the last and two preceding elections for Stafford, and in case any bribery did exist, to Report to the House what persons it might be fit to indemnify for the purpose of proving it. The noble and learned Lord concluded by moving that, "the second reading of the Bill be postponed, and the matter referred to a Secret Committee to inquire as to the bribery said to be practised at the last and the two preceding elections, and to Report to the House what persons it might be proper to indemnify."

Lord *Ellenborough* thought that the House, though it had precedents of indemnifying witnesses, was placed at present in a very difficult situation, for the other House had not adopted any means of getting exact information as to the necessity of the present Bill. The Commons had not examined evidence or adopted any method of clearing away the doubts that might rest upon their Lordships' minds as to the case before them, and even if they had, it would be still somewhat difficult for their Lordships to decide upon it. As the matter stood it was most difficult, since it turned upon the circumstance of two persons having informed the right hon. Secretary-at-war (Mr. Ellice), that, at the last election, 524 out of 526 voters had been bribed, and, perhaps, that was all the other House knew of the business. As their Lordships' House was the highest judicial body in the realm, they should be very cautious how they established any precedents affecting the rights of the people, and the due investigation of all judicial matters which came before them. He saw great difficulty in dealing with the case, but, on the whole, he thought that it would be better to postpone the second reading of the Bill until to-morrow or the next day, that their Lordships might have time to satisfy themselves with respect to the statements made in the preamble of the Bill. It was not safe to proceed to the second reading, merely on what had been stated by the noble Earl.

The *Lord Chancellor* was perfectly ready to admit, that the proceeding upon the present Bill was novel and unprecedented, at least to the extent of not hearing evidence at the bar of their Lordships' House. Though no inquiry had been instituted, such as he believed had always been resorted to on such occasions, yet he was clear in the opinion that they ought not to interpose any obstacle in the way of the due execution of justice, but that, on the contrary, they should give it every possible facility in its course. The question for their Lordships was, how they could best effect that object conformably with the practice of Parliament? In the first place, he would beg to observe, that he could not agree with his noble and learned friend in thinking that persons giving evidence before a Secret Committee of their Lordships would be exempt from penal consequences, if they had been guilty of any offence connected with the circumstances which that evidence might bring to light, though no doubt means might be devised for insuring to them that protection which the necessity of the case might demand; but, without some special arrangement, witnesses might be subjected to serious consequences arising from the evidence given before a Committee. There would, indeed, be a difficulty about finding against them, for if an application were made to the House to permit any noble Lord of the Committee to be examined as a witness against them; that would scarcely be granted, yet if it were the witnesses might be convicted in the Courts of Law by their own testimony, or at least by a circumstance, which that testimony might bring to light. That, however, was so very unusual a proceeding; and the chance of its being resorted to so remote, that it need not for a moment be taken into account; and he, therefore, thought that his noble and learned friend had a right to say, that witnesses would be perfectly safe in giving their testimony. Notwithstanding that, however, he begged to remind their Lordships, that the appointment of a Secret Committee would be itself a novelty in the proceedings of that House, and he, therefore, should wish for time to consider a proposition of that nature, and time to look for precedents. He would recommend his noble friend, the Earl of Radnor, to agree to the adjournment of the debate for a few days. He must add, that there were some things in the Bill which he did not approve of, but as his noble friend professed his readiness to admit of alterations, he would not then enter into the subject. Before he sat down, he begged to observe, that whatever bribery might have been committed in Stafford, it had no connection whatever with the great measure of Reform; for he took it for granted, that there was not a noble Lord in that House who did not well know that the bribery took place in that borough long before the Reform Bill was introduced into the other House. It was well known that, during an election in Stafford, it was no uncommon practice for electors to walk about the town with bank notes stuck in their hats by way of cockades; and that practice prevailed, and open and notorious bribery prevailed, long before the late measure of Reform had been heard of. He believed his noble and learned friend (Lord Wynford) did not mean to depreciate the value of that important measure; but he must be allowed to say, that his noble and learned friend had stepped a little out of his way to make a remark in reference to it, which was anything but favourable. The Bill then before their Lordships was one which required their attentive consideration without any reference to party feelings; and he hoped that they would come down, on the next occasion, prepared to discharge their duty to the country—to the borough of Stafford, and to the other House of Parliament, by devising the most effectual means for investigating those scandalous practices with which the borough stood charged.

Debate adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, April 22, 1833.

MINUTES.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of Mr. EMERSON TENNANT, an Account of all Monies deposited with Sheriffs, or other Returning Officers throughout Ireland, during the late general Election, and the manner in which that Money was disposed of.

New Writs issued. On the Motion of Mr. CHARLES WOOD, for Worcestershire (West), in the room of the Hon. THOMAS FOLEY, (now Lord FOLEY); and for the Inverness Burghs, in the room of JOHN BAILLIE, Esq., deceased.

Petitions presented. By the Marquess of CHANDOS, Lord W. LENNOX, Sir JOHN TYRELL, Mr. W. BANKES, Mr. DUGDALE, Mr. W. EVANS, Mr. C. MARJORIBANKS, and Mr. LOCKE, from a Number of Places,—for a Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By Mr. WATSON, from Cranbrook, against Legislative Enactments for the Observance of the Lord's Day.—By Mr. ROEBUCK, from London and Westminster, for Facilitating the giving of Instructive and Scientific Lectures on Sundays.—By Lord DUDLEY STUART, Sir FRANCIS BLAKE, Sir JOHN TYRELL, Sir G. PHILLIPS, Mr. GORE, Mr. SLANEY, Mr. R. WILLIAMS, Mr. BRODIE, Mr. N. CALVERT, Mr. PETER, Mr. COLLIER, Mr. C. BERKELEY, Mr. POULTER, Mr. A. WILLIAMS, Mr. GASKELL, Mr. M. A. TAYLOR, Mr. W. EVANS, Mr. DUGDALE, Mr. W. F. HANDLEY, Mr. WATSON, Mr. WINDHAM, Mr. H. HANDLEY, Mr. HALL, Mr. R. SHAWE, Mr. STRICKLAND, Mr. C. MARJORIBANKS, Mr. BRIGSTOCK, Mr. WATKINS, Mr. TURNER, Mr. LOCKE, Mr. ROBERT WILLIAMS, and Major HANDLEY, from a Number of Places,—against Slavery.—By Mr. W. BANKES, and Mr. H. HANDLEY,—for Removing the Civil Disabilities of the Dissenters.—By Mr. DIVETT, from Exeter; by Mr. W. EVANS, from Leicester; and by Mr. WATKINS, from Brecknock, for correcting Corporation Abuses.—By Mr. WATSON, from Canterbury; Mr. WINDHAM, from Norwich; Mr. TENNYSON, from

Camberwell; Sir SAMUEL WHALLEY, from Marylebone; and by Mr. BRODIE, Mr. Serjeant SPANKIE, and Sir JOHN TYRELL, from several Places,—against the Assessed Taxes.—By Mr. WINDHAM, from the Hundred of Diss; and Sir JOHN TYRELL, from Tendring,—against the Duty on Taxed Carts.—By the Earl of KERRY, Mr. DUGDALE, Mr. W. BANKES, the Marquess of CHANDOS, Mr. PELHAM, Mr. FYSCHE PALMER, and Sir E. KERRISON, from many Places,—for Alterations in the Sale of Beer Act.—By Sir JOHN TYRELL, from the Innkeepers of the County of Essex, complaining of the Inequality of Taxation.—By Mr. SLANEY, and Mr. NEWTON FELLOWES, from two Places,—against Tithes.—By Mr. STRICKLAND, from Hebden Bridge, in favour of the Factories' Regulation Bill.—By Colonel LEITH HAY, and Mr. M'LEOD, from Kintore and Nairn,—for an Alteration in the Royal Burgh (Scotland) Bill.—By Mr. D. GASKELL, and Sir R. SIMEON, from Wakefield and the Isle of Wight,—for Relief from Taxation.—By Mr. W. ROCHE, from Separatists of Limerick, and Ennis, to substitute a Solemn Affirmation for an Oath.—By Mr. H. HANDLEY, from Peterborough, against Altering the Winchester to the Imperial Measure.

LENDING NEWSPAPERS—RICHARD CARLILE.] Mr. *Roebuck* presented a Petition from a boy seventeen years old who had been confined for selling unstamped papers. The petitioner acknowledged that he had broken the law, but asserted that there were daily violations of the law with reference to the Stamp Duties, committed by publicans and others with the most perfect impunity, though the latter offences were such as did much greater harm to the revenue than what he had done. The petitioner alluded to the 29th George 3rd, by which any person lending a newspaper is liable to the penalty of *5l.* for each offence, yet violations of this law were daily and hourly committed with perfect impunity. The hon. Member had also to present a Petition from one who seemed to have the mark of Cain upon him, so universally was this man avoided, though suffering under the persecution of tyrannical fanaticism. The present petition was from Richard Carlile, praying to be released from imprisonment. The petitioner had entreated almost every Member to present it, including his own Representatives, but he had almost universally met with a flat refusal, though there appeared to be nothing offensive in it. He (Mr. Roebuck) however, considered it his duty to present the petition of any forlorn or persecuted individual. And though he might differ in many points in opinion with the present petitioner, yet he hoped his prayer would receive due attention. The petitioner stated, that he was now in the third year of an imprisonment, to which he had been sentenced for certain paragraphs with reference to the miserable country people, at the period when fires were very rife in the rural districts, and which were unjustly alleged to have been intended as incitations to incendiarism. For this he had been sentenced to two years' imprisonment (already expired, though he was still kept confined) to pay a fine of *500l.* and to find securities for 1,000*l.* more. This certainly seemed a heavy punishment for a few unguarded expressions, as the writer declared them to be. The petitioner detailed various former persecutions suffered by him and his family. The petitioner had been most harshly treated by the present Recorder of London—than whom he really never knew or heard of a more captious, and less careful, calm, and considerate Judge, nor one more wholly unworthy, and incapable of performing the great duties of the office he now held; and he (Mr. Roebuck) hoped that the day would shortly arrive when such a Judge would no longer encumber the Bench. This Judge, when asked by the Jury to explain the law, refused to do so. The Jury retired, and returned again, and wished to know whether the work of which they were to judge was libellous in the eyes of the law?—a very proper question for men to put who did not understand the law, and a question that it was peculiarly the duty and province of a Judge to answer and explain. But what did the Recorder say? Instead of telling them that, by Mr. Fox's Act, it was wholly their province to determine whether it was a libel or not, he shortly said, "I have already told you my opinion whether it is libellous or not, and all you have to do is to find a verdict upon the whole case." Thus, the Jury were not supplied with that information which they required; and he must say, that the Recorder was more culpable than the petitioner. The petitioner proceeded to state that he was now in the third year of his imprisonment, having been sentenced to two years only, but was detained, because he was unable to pay a fine and find sureties; and, if the Government refused to release him on other terms, it would be tantamount to a sentence of imprisonment for life. For himself he would say, that certainly, if he were in the prisoner's situation, and was in the habit of writing daily upon popular questions he would not find sureties. He asked whether it was possible that a Government acting upon such principles could ever hope to have the confidence of the people?

Mr. *Lamb* said, that with regard to the first petitioner, the lad Barber, he thought his petition came before the House in a very questionable shape. He made no complaints as to his own sentence, nor offered anything in mitigation, but merely complained that certain other parties violated the law, as the petitioner thought, with impunity. If the enactment here referred to, however, were enforced, it would be far more tyrannical than that under which the lad was punished. Besides he did not consider the words of the Act referable to the lending of papers in the case alluded to by the petitioner. With regard to Mr. Carlile, there was enough to show that there were ample grounds for his prosecution, and punishment, without any reference to his former conduct. What was his offence? What had he done? Why, at a time when fires were blazing in every part of the kingdom, he wrote an exciting address to the insurgents. For this offence he had been tried by the laws of his country. An honest Jury found him guilty, and he saw no reason for any interference on the part of the Crown. He must however before sitting down, deprecate in the strongest manner the terms in which the member for Bath had spoken of the Recorder of London, which appeared to him highly improper in a Member of that House. As far as he could discern, the Recorder had discharged his duty with propriety. With regard to the punishment inflicted on Mr. Carlile, it was very severe, but not more severe than his offence deserved. As to his being confined beyond the term of his imprisonment for want of sureties, he thought the hon. Member was wrong. If it were the case, under the alleged circumstances, a refusal to depart from the words of the sentence would certainly amount to imprisonment for life. However, into that part, he would make some inquiry, though he did not say there was any ground for the exercise of the Royal Prerogative.

RUSSIANS AT CONSTANTINOPLE.] Mr. *Thomas Attwood* wished to ask a question relative to our foreign policy. It was well known, that for several years past Russia had coveted the possession of Constantinople. The public had heard a great number of alarming rumours during the last week which gave them reason to believe that Constantinople was already in the possession of the Russians. He wished to have the happiness, therefore, to hear that steps had been taken by the Government to prevent a result which would be disastrous to the best interests of Europe, and inconsistent with the honour of England.

Lord *Althorp* said, he knew nothing of Constantinople being in the possession of the Russians, and the negotiations on the subject alluded to were not in such a state that he could say anything on the subject. Indeed, it would be highly improper in him were he to take any means of gratifying the hon. Member.

STATE OF THE COUNTRY—MONETARY SYSTEM.] Mr. *Attwood* rose to bring forward a Motion relative to the state of the country. He thanked the noble Lord for his courtesy in not moving the Order of the Day, and in allowing him to proceed. Since he had had the honour of a seat in that House he had frequently felt it to be his duty to urge upon the House the propriety of an inquiry into the state of prosperity or otherwise of the middle and lower classes, and particularly to ascertain in what manner their interests were affected by that monetary system which, since the end of the war, it had been attempted to establish. Hitherto he had made these efforts in vain. That House had not been induced by any representations of his, nor by the increasing disasters of the last eighteen years, nor by the demands of the people, to direct its attention to the real state of the country, and the effect which our monetary system had upon all the great interests of the people. He knew not that he could now recommend this inquiry to the House by any arguments or statements which he had not before submitted to its consideration; but there was this to be said in favour of the same arguments and the same statements, that they brought down with them the testimony of time and experience, showing the increasing calamities which he had predicted, and confirming all that he had said, by the testimony of time and experience against the mischievous policy, the vain delusions, and the mistaken theories by which he had been opposed. And those individuals by whom he had been before opposed, should they come forward again to oppose him to-night, would at least be expected to show by experience that time had proved their arguments to have been correct, and that they had not been led astray by erroneous suppositions and unfounded assumptions. He confessed, however, that it was with better hope for the country, and with greater confidence in the present House, that he now came forward to propose the Motion with which he should have the honour to conclude, than he had ever before felt when submitting a similar Motion to former Houses of Commons. He recognised in the present House of Commons a body of men more disposed to act each upon his own individual judgment than he had found in any former Parliament. In previous Houses of Commons a disposition had prevailed on the part of the majority to surrender their vote to the interests of the party to which the Ministers happened to belong, and with their vote they surrendered their judgment also to the leaders of party. It was not his intention to discuss the advantage or disadvantage of political combinations. Whether the combinations of party were for good or for evil he recognised in that House, as at present constituted, a disposition to disregard the obligations of party, to act upon the conviction of individual judgment, and not to surrender for the advantage of a few that great trust which was given for the general interests of the country. The great leaders of parties in that House, those who either were at the moment or had been in power, were always averse to have the calamities of the country imputed to legislation. The leaders of both parties in that House, in an evil hour for the country, had, with great precipitance, and with greater error committed their judgment to a monetary system of a character most defective and disastrous, and which, instead of aiding the movements of industry, clogged and impeded the whole machine, and had enormously increased all the burthens of the country. They had united for the purpose of opposing inquiry, and they might, and it was probable they would so unite again; but he hoped they would not be followed by the rest of the House, whose characters were not pledged to a particular measure, and whose judgment was not biased by a pledge unthinkingly given. All that he sought was inquiry, and he knew of no heavier error than that which had induced the leading men of that House to refuse the call of the country to inquire into the calamitous consequences of their own policy. With these prefatory remarks he would proceed to detail to the House the real condition of the country, and what he was prepared to prove before a Committee, should one be granted to him. Before he did so, however, he would briefly advert to some of the grounds upon which his Motion for inquiry had formerly been met. Few things were more difficult than to obtain a hearing for the complaints of the people within those walls. Upon no subject did the House ever listen with more reluctance. The Ministers were averse from hearing of calamities. There was no unequivocal state of distress which the country had suffered for many years past, the existence of which accordingly had not been denied. There were always some individual Members ready to confront by their individual knowledge the general knowledge upon the subject of distress. There was never wanting upon such an occasion some person who had letters in his pocket from particular districts where all things were proceeding, if not with comfort and prosperity, at least with all the appearances of amendment and all the promise of certain recovery from temporary depression. The hon. member for Essex (Mr. Baring) was rarely wanting with the aid of his opinion and testimony upon such occasions. He was not a merchant, he would tell the House, but then he happened to have the good fortune to know those who were merchants, and he was informed that things were going on prosperously in this place, and in that; trade was becoming brisk again; and, probably, as soon as the question of the Bank Charter should be finally disposed of, all would go on as well as ever it had done. And so in that strain the hon. member for Essex would go on, thinking, as he had so much reason to be satisfied with his own condition, that there could not be so much distress in the country as had been described. Then on the part of the Government there never was wanting upon such occasions some one connected with the administration to rise and refer to the last Returns of the Excise or the Customs, proving an increased consumption of the article of starch, or bricks, or tiles, or some other article equally important, to establish the gratifying fact of increased means on the part of the people, and returning prosperity. And to evidence of that description, to documents backed by the respectable authority of some Surveyor General of the Customs were the people of this country expected to give up the testimony of their own judgments and feelings. He never had known such documents fairly used, and he (Mr. Attwood) would undertake out of such materials to prove any proposition whatever. In illustration of his argument he would refer to the case of an hon. friend of his who had on one occasion quoted the number of persons who had taken out wine licences as a proof of prosperity; but at the very time there was lying on the Table a return showing that the quantity of wine sold had decreased. What was this, then, but a proof of decay, of the slackness of business, which drove the decaying dealers to struggle against each other? Such modes of demonstrating the prosperity of the people, however satisfactory to former Houses of Commons, had excited the discontent and the indignation of the people. They had first forfeited for the Parliament the confidence of the nation, and, compelling the House of Commons to withdraw its confidence from the administration, had precipitated its fall. If that line of argument were again adopted, it would lead to a corresponding result; but he hoped better things of the present House of Commons. The noble Lord had admitted, in the course of his financial statement on the 19th, that the country was labouring under great distress; and, when he joined to that admission, the description of the course which Parliament ought to pursue under such circumstances, he owned he had better hopes than formerly that his proposition for inquiry would not be rejected. The noble Lord, at the head of his Majesty's Government, in language too forcible ever to be forgotten, said, that "if during a state of peace there existed distress, if the country was not in a state of decent prosperity, Parliament had one paramount duty to perform, and that was, to institute an examination, of the most searching and extensive nature, and to probe to the bottom the whole of those causes which, in a period of profound peace, permitted the country to remain in a state of distress." These were the words of the noble Earl, and he now claimed the performance of the pledge they implied. On the financial statement made by the noble Lord (Lord Althorp), only a day or two ago, he (Mr. Attwood) was willing to rest his demand for an inquiry. The noble Lord thought if he introduced his Budget it might possibly prevent this Motion. He asked the House, whether they saw any grounds in the financial statement of the noble Lord for withdrawing the present Motion, at a time when it appeared that taxes were no longer paid out of profits but out of capital? The noble Lord also desired, that the Motion of the hon. member for London (Sir John Key) on the Assessed-taxes should be postponed till after the Budget, doubtless in the hope that the shopkeepers of the metropolis should be satisfied with his proposition of Friday night. But a few months back a body of tradesmen waited upon the noble Lord opposite to demand relief from the pressure of the Assessed-taxes. He told them to wait till after he had opened his Budget, as no doubt they would find some relief from that source. What relief had the Budget given them? The representation made by the tradesmen to the noble Lord was, that they could not go on paying the present taxes without bankruptcy as the consequence. The noble Lord's answer in his Budget speech was, that if he took off any of the taxes, the Exchequer would not be in a better condition, nor far removed from a state of bankruptcy. Taking the fact to be, on the one hand, as the noble Lord stated it, and, on the other hand, as the trading deputation represented to be their condition, was there not, he asked, abundant reason for instituting an inquiry into so strange and alarming a state of things after eighteen years of profound peace? The noble Lord had told them, that, with a revenue of 50,000,000*l.* a-year, he could not command a surplus of more than 500,000*l.* Now, he called upon the House, as the guardians of the public faith, to say, whether a miserable surplus of 500,000*l.* afforded a reasonable security for the due maintenance of the public faith? He would ask the hon. member for Essex, he would ask all those who were such staunch advocates for preserving the national faith, whether that could be accomplished by a surplus of 500,000*l.*? What a multitude of causes might there not happen to produce a fall in the revenue? A failure in the next harvest, occurrences abroad impeding trade, might cause the falling-off to the amount of several millions. Then, what resource had the noble Lord to pay the interest of the public debt? Would he borrow from the Bank? Would he adopt any of those modern expedients which were always followed by convulsion and calamity? He would take the noble Lord from the prospect of an indigent people and a decaying Exchequer, to one of a very different character. The noble Lord had represented to the House, that the people of this country paid fifty millions of taxes with great difficulty, with increasing pauperism, increasing crime, and decaying prosperity. He begged the noble Lord to turn his eyes back to that period when the people of this country paid nearly eighty millions of taxes without difficulty, with increasing wealth, and decreasing pauperism. In 1815, according to the statement of a right reverend Prelate, who published a book on the subject in 1819, the amount paid for pauperism was equivalent to 1,300,000 quarters of wheat. At present, according to the noble Lord opposite, it was equivalent to 3,000,000 quarters of wheat. But let the House go back to the period when 78,000,000*l.* of taxes were paid annually. Were the people in a state of suffering? Did they feel that difficulty in supporting the burthen which the noble Lord had represented them to feel now? How did the war end? Was it because the people were unable to support the weight of taxation? Were the resources of the country exhausted, or the patience of the people fatigued? No! The war ended with the attainment of every object for which it had been undertaken; it was not brought to a close because of the discontent and poverty of the people of this country, but because there was no longer an enemy to contend with. Still, when he showed the same people who, in 1815, paid without difficulty 78,000,000*l.* a-year now broken down under the weight of only 50,000,000*l.*, he only stated half the question. In order to ascertain the extent of a weight it was necessary to measure the strength which had to support it. The state of the population, and the state of the finances ought to be placed beside each other. In the year 1815 the amount of taxation was 78,240,000*l.* In 1814 it was 77,300,000*l.*; he meant taxes absolutely levied on the people, and exclusive of the cost of collection. In 1813 it was 73,400,000*l.* Let them place beside these sums the population of the country as an index to its resources. The population of the country, as appeared by Parliamentary Returns, was, in 1815, 18,700,000. At present it amounted to 24,000,000. Thus 18,700,000 persons had paid without difficulty 78,000,000*l.* of taxes whilst the greater number of 24,000,000 broke down under the weight of 50,000,000*l.* Here he might rest, and appeal to the House to grant the inquiry he demanded. If a merchant or a professional man were to see such evidence of declining prosperity in his affairs, would he not be deemed insane not to institute a rigid and extensive inquiry, in order to ascertain the cause, whether he hoped to be able to remove it or not? He knew that it was the doctrine of a certain school of philosophers that an increasing population was not only the sign of prosperity, but was itself prosperity. He did not mean to enter into the abstract question. It had been the bane of the country that its legislation had followed these abstract doctrines of the philosophers with too much subserviency, making the great interests of the country depend upon the contingency of the philosophers being right or wrong in their theory. It was, however, no mark of a discreet philosophy to insist upon the acceptance of its doctrines. The habits engendered in prosperity were not easily to be shaken off in adversity, and he feared that it would be long ere philosophy accomplished the difficult task of teaching the strongest passions of human nature the power of bridling themselves so as to check imprudent marriages; and, through the medium of moral restraint, limit the population of a country within the means of subsistence. He had stated the amount of taxation in 1815—let the House next turn to the amount which had been reduced. The amount of taxation taken off altogether since the termination of the war up to 1834, was 38,000,000*l.*; but other burthens had been imposed which must be deducted from that sum. Taking that into consideration, however, 34,500,000*l.* had been actually taken off the shoulders of the people since the peace; leaving 43,700,000*l.* to make up the 78,200,000*l.* which was the amount in 1815. But, in correspondence with the expectations of the different Finance Ministers who had reduced taxes, the revenue had not lost equal to the amount of the whole tax taken off, by reason of the increased consumption of the article. The principle was in itself correct, and it had been pretty strictly adhered to. Since the peace the taxes had been diminished by more than 30,000,000*l.*, and yet the distress of every class in the community had deplorably increased. If any person examined his statements, it would be found that the population had during that time increased nearly one-fourth, its power of consuming the necessaries and comforts of life had only increased about one-tenth. If, with a reduced taxation, and an increase in population, there was also increasing distress, was there not reason to conclude, that taxation was not the cause of the national calamities? How, then, he would ask, was the distress to be accounted for? Simply in consequence of the change in our monetary system. During that period of eighteen years there had been a time—a time before we had restricted our monetary system — when the country, and all classes in it, were rapidly advancing in the career of prosperity. There was, during that period, a time of growing prosperity and wealth throughout the country; there had been, during those eighteen years, some years of a prosperity as general, and as much marked by an increase in our commerce and trade, as any that had been known in the brightest eras of this country's history. The amount of the revenue in 1825 exceeded by 7,700,000*l.* the amount of the revenue in 1823. In 1824 the revenue had increased above that of 1823 by 3,600,000*l.*; and in 1825 it had increased to the amount of 7,700,000*l.* It might be said, no doubt, that the close of the year 1825 was a period of calamity. That calamity was attributable to the speculations of the merchants and fundholders; but it would be absurd to attribute it to a circumstance which occurred during the same period—namely, an increased consumption of the necessaries and comforts of life, and an increased activity of trade and commerce on the part of the great body of the people. During that year there had been an undoubted increase of trade, and of the profits of trade, amongst the mass of the population; but it would be idle to attribute to the speculations of the great community of producers and consumers a calamity which was solely attributable to the speculations of a number of merchants and fundholders. He would then go to another part of those eighteen years, which was divested of all question of speculation — he referred to the year 1818. Allowing for the taxes taken off and the taxes imposed during the three years ending in 1818, there had been an increase in the revenue of 11,900,000*l.* in the course of that time; showing a proportionate increase in the power of the people over the consumption of the necessaries and conveniences of life. The monetary system was screwed up in 1819; it was relaxedin 1824 and 1825, and distress prevailed when it was tightened, while prosperity followed its relaxation. The results up to 1818 and subsequent to 1823 were obviously the result of legislative interference with the money of the country; and as it had produced, first distress, then prosperity, and now distress again, it was its duty to look carefully to its own acts. It was worse than mockery to pretend, that the distress of the country was not connected with the change that had taken place in our monetary system; and it would be an insult to the people, who were suffering under that distress, to say that it was not one of the bounden and most important duties of that House to inquire into such a cause as the distress and suffering of the country. The present House of Commons stood in a different situation with regard to the people, from the last or any former House of Commons. During the seventeen years that had elapsed, up to the dissolution of the last House of Commons, successive Administrations had endeavoured to rival each other in their boasted reductions of the burthens on the people; but while, on the one hand, for what they had openly done in relieving the burthens of the people they claimed the public applause and gratitude, the House of Commons was, on the other hand, all the time employed in silently imposing still greater burthens on the people by increasing the value of the currency. He would, therefore, put it to the Members of the present House of Commons, whether the time was not come when they should effectually apply themselves to that which had been so long neglected by their predecessors—to the institution of a thorough inquiry into the real causes of the distresses of the people: he would put it to them, whether the time had not come when they should endeavour to retrace the steps of former Parliaments, and thereby to relieve the labouring and productive classes from their present state of suffering and distress. The question was, whether it would not be a measure consistent with good faith and honesty—the only basis, he admitted, of legislation—to increase the power of the people to endure their burthens, and restore them to that state of prosperity, of which, with a proper currency, even war could not deprive them? He would appeal to the consistency of those Gentlemen who cheered, to vote with him for this inquiry. He would engage to demonstrate, if that inquiry should be granted, that that was the only means left to them for effectually relieving the burthens of the people. If they had increased those burthens, as he would contend that they had done, by the alteration which they had made in the value of money; they had, on the other hand, by the same measure, increased the amount of payments made to those who received salaries out of the taxes. The salaries of all those who were paid out of the public Exchequer had been increased without any additional claim in the way of services on their parts, and the manifest duty of the House, if it found that it could not increase the people's power of bearing their burthens in the manner he had stated, would be, to proceed at once to reduce those burthens, by reducing the payments made out of the Exchequer for the public establishments, and for the salaries of the public servants, to an extent proportionate to the increase that had taken place in the value of money. It would be vain to endeavour to evade such a course—justice demanded it, and necessity would enforce it. If the conclusion which he had drawn was a correct one (and he challenged inquiry on the subject) the position he maintained was this—that the change which had been made in our monetary system had spread distress universally amongst all classes of the community. He would appeal to those best acquainted with the different interests of the country, whether, since that change had been made, those interests had not been progressively sinking deeper and deeper into difficulties, distress, and embarrassment. To begin with the first and most important of all interests—the landed interest. It would not be denied, he was sure, that the proprietor of the land, and the labourer who tilled it, formed a most important branch of the national wealth and prosperity; that with their prosperity the prosperity of the country was materially connected; and that it might be safely and justly concluded when the landed interest prospered, the country at large was in a state of prosperity. He had heard in that House upon different occasions two different assertions with regard to the landed interest, coming, too, rather inconsistently from the same parties, and often uttered by them upon the same occasion. He had often heard it said in that House, that the landlords should reduce their rents, and he had heard it as often asserted by the same parties, that the rent of land had been reduced to a level with the prices of agricultural produce. Undoubtedly, the advocates of public faith, they who so strenuously stickled for the inviolable maintenance of the contracts made with the public creditor, had no right to call upon the landlords to abandon their interests—to give up their contracts. He for one entertained no respect for the consistency of those who would, on the one side, bolster up the public faith, and who thus, on the other, utterly disregarded the faith of our previous contracts. A general reduction of the rents of the country to a level of the rents in 1792 would, if it took place, produce a complete confiscation of the property of the proprietors of a great portion of the land of England. The taxes in 1792 amounted to 14,000,000*l.*, and they were at present more than 50,000,000*l.* The same rents that would not at present, under the existing pressure of taxation, keep open the door of the landed proprietor, would be sufficient in 1792 to maintain him in dignity and splendor. Again, it should be borne in mind, that land was generally encumbered in divers ways with various engagements, such as mortgages, family settlements, &c., most of which had been probably laid upon it previous to the passing of the law for altering the currency, and yet the advocates for the maintenance of the public faith demanded that the landlords should, under such circumstances, reduce their rents to the level of 1792; they required, forsooth, that the landed proprietors should be the only class in the country to give up their legal claims, to relinquish that which the law and their contracts gave them, and that they should set an example which would not be followed by any other class of the community, and the effect of which would be the entire and complete confiscation of every shilling of their property. But the noble Lord (Lord Althorp) had told them that rents had been already reduced, that they had been reduced to the level of the reduction in the price of agricultural produce, and that a relaxation in the monetary system which would increase that price would cause great injustice, and was uncalled for and unnecessary. He was contented to rest his case upon that fact; if the noble Lord would honour him with his candid attention, he would engage to establish to his satisfaction, that rents had not fallen in proportion to the fall that had taken place in the value of agricultural produce. He was aware that at former periods, and on former occasions, when the manufacturers were suffering under peculiar distress, they and others called for what he regarded as one species of confiscation of the property of the landed interest—namely, a repeal of the Corn-laws. He alluded however, now to another species of confiscation of landed property which was in actual operation. If this inquiry should be granted, he would engage to prove that a confiscation of the property of the landed interest was necessarily consequent upon the fall of prices produced by the change in our monetary system, that that change was not yet complete, that it was every hour in operation, that it was progressively confiscating the property throughout the country, that the House might, if it wished, rescue the people from ruin by giving a relaxation of the monetary system, to what extent he would not say, so as to afford an increase of means to the farmer to meet his engagements, and that nothing but a total disregard of national faith and of sound national policy would induce them to refuse it. What was the present state of the agricultural interest? He would just refer them to the report recently laid before the House from the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the state of the Poor-laws for some pregnant evidence upon that point. Those Commissioners had in the first instance distributed a circular of questions to the different overseers and churchwardens throughout the country. One of those questions was, "Has agricultural capital increased or diminished in your neighbourhood?" Upwards of 2,000 answers had been obtained from eighteen counties. From the county of Cornwall there were seventeen returns stating that agricultural capital had increased, four that it had diminished, and five that it had continued stationary; and, in the instances where it was mentioned as having increased, it was noticed that there had been either one or two good harvests. With the exception, however, of the county of Cornwall, and of a county in Wales from which there had been only two returns—with those two exceptions, the uniform answer from the whole of the other sixteen counties was, that agricultural capital had diminished, and in no county had it diminished more fearfully than in the county of Essex. The fact was, that the alteration which had been made in the value of money, had not as yet produced its adjustment, though they were told that it had as to the prices of agricultural produce. It was at that moment in progress, and the only way of arresting the further confiscation of the property of the landed interest, consisted in relaxing the present monetary system. If they did not do that, the infliction of our present monetary system would be productive of a confiscation and plunder unequalled in its extent by any recorded in the history of the civilized world. It would not be denied that the agricultural interest was at present involved in the deepest distress. Was it so before the passing of the Bill to which the name of the right hon. Baronet (Sir Robert Peel) was attached? Did they before that Bill passed, hear of the strides of pauperism throughout the agricultural districts of this country? Was there any talk at that period of the distress of the landlords, of the destruction of agricultural capital, of the ruin of the farmers, and of the dangers that threatened the security of all landed property? By the present system, honest expectations were frustrated, industry was checked, capital was rendered unproductive, and a general scene of misery was exhibited throughout the country. The cattle of the farmer were disappearing from the fields, the manure was no longer spread upon the land, and the meadows were no longer fruitful, even in the most fertile districts of the country. In short every branch of industry was profitless or unsuccessful. Pauperism had increased to a deplorable extent; and, while the farmer was ruined, the labourer was rendered slavish, for he no longer enjoyed his former independence of character. It might be said that the blame of this rested with the poor laws and the parish officers in the distribution of the Poor-rates. He invited the House to inquire into the real causes that had produced such distress. The Poor-laws had existed in this country for upwards of two centuries before any one had attributed to them a tendency to destroy the agricultural labourers, or to lessen the security of landed property.

They had been established for 150 years before the revenue collected under them amounted to 600,000*l.*; and he now called upon the House to institute an inquiry which would set at rest the question, whether now for the first time we found that those laws, for giving the poor man a right to subsistence, tended to destroy the independence of the labourers, and the security of the landed interest. There were no Poor-laws in Ireland, and yet, he would ask, was the agricultural interest better off in that country than it was in this? They certainly applied a different remedy to the distress in Ireland, for they had been six weeks engaged in discussing a bill for putting down disturbances that were wholly caused by distress. But, he would ask, could no means be devised of remedying the evils of that country without the introduction of Martial-law? A Committee of the House of Commons had been appointed last year to examine into the state of the disturbed counties in Ireland, into the immediate causes which had produced the same, and into the efficiency of the laws for the suppression of outrages against the public peace. The approaching close of the Session prevented the Committee from preparing a detailed report; but they referred to the evidence taken before the Committee as illustrative of the causes of the disturbances. If the cause might be judged of by that evidence, it did not appear that the illegal combinations of Whitefeet were their original cause; nor was the hon. and learned member for Dublin the cause. Throughout the whole folio volume of evidence, the name of that hon. and learned Gentleman was never mentioned in connexion with the disturbances in Ireland. He was indeed satisfied, that if that hon. and learned Gentleman, and all who took an active part in Irish affairs were banished to-morrow, nothing would be done towards the re-establishment of tranquillity in Ireland. The kind of divided empire which the hon. and learned member for Dublin held with the King in Ireland, was not the cause, but the consequence of the disturbed state of that country. The cause was, the extreme poverty and utter destitution of the Irish people; the high rents, the low wages, the absence of employment in consequence of the farmers not having the means to pay the labourers. What was the nature of the evidence published in the Report of Mr. Singleton, the chief Magistrate of Police for the Colliery District, in the Queen's County? To various questions put to that Gentleman, the substance of his answers was, "that the principal cause of the disturbances related to ground; to clearing the grounds, and turning the tenants off; to high rents and low wages, and dear con-acres." In another part of Mr. Singleton's evidence, he described the disturbances as principally attributable to "oppression, high rent, low wages, and contracts being broken." When Mr. Nicholas O'Connor, a Roman Catholic priest, whose evidence was also published in the Report of the Committee of last Session, was asked what were the principal objects which the Whitefeet had in their outrages, his answer was, "to keep themselves upon their lands. I have often heard their conversations when they say, 'What good did the Emancipation do us? Are we better clothed or fed, or our children better clothed and fed? Are we not as naked as we were, and eating dry potatoes when we can get them'?" What he (Mr. Attwood) wished the Committee to inquire into with him was, whether there were not means of giving clothes and food to these poor persons? A great deal had been said of the danger which was produced in Ireland by the efforts of the agitators; he was persuaded that much greater danger would arise from that House shutting its eyes to the misery of the Irish people. In a subsequent part of his evidence, speaking of the feeling which their great distress produced in the minds of the poorer classes in Ireland, Mr. O'Connor said, "They care not if they are taken and hanged for those desperate acts committed in a state of revenge; death would be nothing to them; they care nothing for life." Mr. Cahill, another witness, having been asked what line of conduct he would recommend in order to improve the state of things in Ireland, and to prevent the disturbances and calamities which existed there, replied, "I will state what I conceive to be a good mode to put an end to disturbances. I must look back to the years 1810, to 1814"—before the fatal change was made in our monetary system—"when there was an extraordinary price for the produce of land; there were also extraordinary prices for the labour of men, and in consequence of that the men were much inclined for labour: and the farmer getting extraordinary prices for his corn and for various things, he was inclined to carry on a great many works that are now abandoned in the country. Farmers in those times who had wet lands were in the habit of draining the land; and farmers, in those days, were constantly top-dressing their lands with manure, and liming the lands on the surface." When Mr. Cahill was afterwards asked whether, at the period to which he adverted, the farmers of Ireland were generally in the habit of cultivating the land better than they had been since, his answer was, "They were: now the produce of the land not being sufficient to enable the farmer to carry on those works, he is obliged to decline employing the people." This evil, Mr. Cahill attributed to the rents being too high. Now, surely, it was most desirable that an inquiry should be entered into for the purpose of endeavouring to discover whether there were not means of relieving all this distress among the labouring classes—whether in England or in Ireland. Let the words "paupers in England" be substituted for the words "people of Ireland," and the case described in the evidence to which he had just alluded was as applicable to the former as to the latter. Evidence was taken in 1828, before a Committee of the House, upon the subject of the Poor Laws. We had lately had Special Commissions, before whom 1,800 English labourers were brought to trial, of whom 900 were punished in various ways. An hon. Member, in answer to a question put to him by the Committee of 1828, said, that he thought there was plenty of population, if there were sufficient means for employing them. It appeared from the evidence before the Committee of 1828, that there was in the country abundance of employment for the poor; but that the scarcity of money prevented the means of that employment. Hence it was, that the mass of country labourers were made poachers, and those of the towns paupers, and, in many instances, thieves. Hence it was, that our workhouses and our gaols had been filled with the poor and the wretched, who, under a different system, might have continued to be respectable and industrious members of society. Thus, too, it was, that the whole frame of society in this country had been disorganised; nay, he would go further, and attribute a great portion of the disturbances in the sister country, Ireland, to the dreadful change which had been made in our monetary system. Were they not, then, to inquire into, and see how far they were prepared to relax that system which had been productive of such great and general distress in the country, in order to give employment to the more humble classes, and permanent peace, comfort, and tranquillity to the country? Let them consider for a moment what an interest they had in preserving the independence of the agricultural population, because upon that mainly depended the security of the landholder and farmer. They had recently witnessed the bulwark which had hitherto protected the landholder and farmer broken down; they had found the agricultural labourer engaged in the destruction of the property of his employer—engaged, in fact, in the destruction of the produce of his own toil and labour. But why was it thus? If the agriculturist were, by his earnings, placed in a situation in an independent attitude, he would feel his own importance, and would endeavour to preserve his own character and the character and independence of his family. But instead of this, he was driven to distress; his employer, thanks to our monetary system, could not afford to pay him his fair wages, and in many instances he could not be employed at all, so that he was driven to derive a scanty support from sources which debased his character and destroyed his self-respect, and he ultimately became the inmate of a workhouse or a gaol. But he would not pursue the melancholy subject further into detail. The House ought undoubtedly to take into their consideration the deplorable condition of the agricultural interests throughout England, and well weigh the causes which had led to the vast destruction of property that had taken place by agricultural labourers. Labour had become valueless, and crime was the consequence; and surely some effort should be made by the Legislature to alleviate the unmerited sufferings of the most useful class of the people. The claims of the shipping interest followed those of the landed interest. The shipping interest was another great arm of the prosperity of the country. It was next in importance to our agriculture, and our commerce. But what was the state of that interest at the present time, and had it not, like every other interest, fallen into the most lamentable decay? He held in his hand a Memorial, which had been presented to the noble Lord (Lord Althorp) in 1832, from the shipowners of the different seaports in the United Kingdom. This Memorial represented that the shipping interest had been for fifteen years struggling with inconceivable difficulties, and that the large capital embarked in that branch of commerce was wholly unproductive. From the date of this Memorial up to the present time the state of the shipping interest had not improved; on the contrary, the condition of the commercial marine of the country had been in a regular progress of deterioration every year from that time down to the present moment. In short, the ships had not been repaired as they ought to have been, nor were they fitted out or provided with necessaries as they would have been had things been different. The truth was, that the foundations of mercantile prosperity had given way, in consequence of the impolitic course that had been adopted, and the result was, that, if he were to take for example the London merchants who assembled in that great mart of commercial enterprise, the Royal Exchange, three years ago, and contrast them with those who were to be found there now, it would be seen that the merchants of London did not now possess one-third of the wealth and opulence that belonged to them only three years ago. This was a fact that could not be controverted; and if so, what reliance ought they to place upon the statements which had been made in that House of the existence of a little prosperity in this place, and an occasional remission or relaxation of pressure in that? But they would, perhaps, be told to wait a little while longer, and that prosperity would certainly be restored to the country; but had not similar expectations been held out to the productive classes for the last fifteen years, and had not their expectations been disappointed? The industry and manufactures of the country were to have emerged from depression long ago; but what was the result? Why, that at the very least two-thirds of their prosperity had been absolutely annihilated. The condition of the manufacturing interest was wretched in the extreme. He would first speak of the iron trade—a trade always of vast importance in this country, and which was now, he regretted to say, in a state of great distress; but that distress arose out of, and was mainly connected with, the change in our monetary system. The hon. Member here read an extract from a memorial presented by the iron masters in 1831, in which they represented the distresses under which they had continued to labour since the year 1825—distress which all their possible efforts had been unable to relieve. They had reduced their workmen's wages to the utmost—to a point, indeed, which brought most of them to a degree of distress and suffering which it was painful to contemplate, but still without effect. They complained that what with royalties and other charges of various descriptions they were pressed to the earth; and in addition to this, the market prices had fallen nearly one-half. He would ask, then, if the state of this property alone was not sufficient to induce an inquiry into that change in the monetary system by which such great and extensive evil was caused? It surely was the duty of the House of Commons to prevent that which he could designate by no other name than a system of confiscation and robbery from being continued. The hon. Member proceeded to read from the memorial, from which it appeared that the persons concerned in the iron trade represented that, after the enormous expense of machinery, and other necessary outlays, in order to carry on their business, they saw nothing before them but distress, and ultimate ruin to themselves and those employed under them, unless some relief was afforded. He next came to the manufacturing districts, particularly those of Lancashire and Yorkshire. An hon. relative of his (Mr. T. Attwood) had been charged with exaggeration when he pointed out the distress existing amongst the working classes in those counties, and when he stated that the manufacturing of cloths, cottons, &c. were not carried on with any profit to the owners. Whether such exaggeration had or had not taken place he would not stop to inquire; if it had, it might be excusable, in order to induce inquiry; but what excuse could there be for those who gave an exaggerated account of the prosperity of the country in order to prevent all inquiry into the misery which was known to exist. An hon. Gentleman over the way had, on a former occasion, alluded to the distress which existed in France, as a ground, he presumed, that the people of this country had no right to complain. But was the distress existing in any other country a good ground upon which to resist an inquiry into the causes which produced great and unexampled distress amongst all classes in these kingdoms? It was, indeed, a melancholy rivalship, when the distresses of one country were urged against those of another, in order to see which were the greater. But let him take the case as it stood. What did France do when the late visitation—the cholera morbus—came upon Europe? They sent over a commission, at the head of which was the celebrated Dr. Majendie, to inquire into the state and treatment of that malady in this country. That Commission made a Report, in which Dr. Majendie, stated that he had seen all the distress and misery of France, and much of that of other countries; but that he had never witnessed misery and distress equal to that he had seen in this country, and more particularly in Sunderland and its neighbourhood. Such was the distress in our manufacturing districts that in the year 1831 four-fifths of the population of Manchester were receiving parochial relief—[some dissent was manifested to this statement]. Such a statement might appear incredible, but it was the no less true. It was by different persons attributed to different causes. But they deceived themselves who supposed that it was in any way attributable to the power-loom; that instrument of machinery had in no way interfered in causing the distresses of the people. It was his painful duty to call the attention of the House to another suffering class of the community; he meant the number of criminals who infested our gaols from year to year. The hon. Member went over a list of commitments for several years, from which it appeared that the number of persons committed in 1813 was 4,101, and that from that period they annually progressed to 8,000, 9,000, 13,000, 14,000, and 15,000, until at length, in 1832, they amounted to 20,832. Surely the House must see the danger of continuing a system capable of producing such results. No change had taken place in the monetary system without adding to the catalogue of crime which disgraced the country and a reference to the different periods when the circulating medium was interfered with would show the dreadful extent to which criminal offences had increased from one period to another down to the present time. He, therefore, connected not only distress but crime with the monetary system; and it was that same system that had well nigh destroyed all the banks in the United Kingdom. But this he would show by a reference to the consequences which had followed the attempts that had been made from 1819 to 1824 to establish that system. In the last-mentioned year the monetary system was relaxed, but returned to again in 1826, and from thence carried further by other legislative measures in 1828 and 1829, which it was supposed was necessary to secure the permanence and efficiency of the currency. From 1829 the present distresses could clearly be traced; and although they had originated in 1819, yet they might be said to have increased subsequent to 1829, and that the causes had not come into full operation antecedent to that time. In the markets of the country there was not a sufficient circulating medium to meet the value of goods, and unless increased production was accompanied by an increase of currency, the only effect such a monetary system could have was to limit production, and consequently to throw the labouring classes out of employ, and thence occasion want and misery in all directions. This, in fact, was the operation which the present monetary system had had, and he conjured his Majesty's Ministers not to meet his Motion unfairly, or to get rid of it in a way that would be a mockery and an insult to the country. Every one knew that the distress under which the people laboured was consequent upon the monetary system, and the object of his inquiry was, not only to inquire into that distress, but to inquire whether there were means consistently with keeping faith with the public creditor and preserving the national honour by which it could be relieved. There was no interest in the United Kingdom with which the system was not connected; but he wished to know for what interest it was that his Motion was to be opposed? If it should be opposed, and he supposed it would, all he could say was, that the House of Commons, that Reformed Parliament, on whose wisdom the people placed so much confidence, would act most unjustly. The inquiry was a necessary one, and ought in justice to the country to be instituted; but he supposed that the supporters of the present system would deny that any inquiry was called for. But let them look at the system in itself. What it imposed on the Bank was of the most irreconcilable and inconsistent character. It imposed the protection of public credit, and the power of determining the quantity of the circulating medium. They had the power of limiting the quantity of gold in circulation, and of determining what the circulating medium should be; but the Governor of the Bank had, in his evidence before the Committee on the Bank Charter, explained the whole system, and, as he (Mr. Attwood) contended, showed very clearly, that with such a system of currency, ruin must ensue. For instance, the Bank, consulting its own profits, extended its issues. A panic arrived, and then the Bank, alarmed for its own safety, contracted its issues; and the consequence was, that the trading public suffered by this unexpected scarcity of, and consequent rise in, the value of money. While such a state of things existed our monetary system must continue in a state of fluctuation, which must place at hazard, and render unsafe, all trading and speculation in business. The state of our monetary system had given rise to a miserable rivalship between the Bank of England and the different private banks of the country. It was a known fact—indeed it had been stated in evidence before the House of Commons, that at one period of the celebrated panic in 1825, the Bank of England had not more than 1,300,000*l.* in gold in their possession. This small sum was all they had with which to pay the immense obligations to which they were liable—obligations which, on their own and the Government's account, amounted to nearly 800,000,000*l.* What was it at a great crisis that saved this country, according to the words of a celebrated Statesman, from being "in forty-eight hours in a state of barter? A box of these derided 1*l.* notes, discovered by the merest accident, and in his opinion, by the greatest good luck. Now, he should much like to know, what, or where was the authority for this vaunted standard of value. The consequence would have been a state of barter, and no one could doubt, that if that had been established for a week, or even for a day, there would not have been an hour's security hardly for a man's life—certainly for his property. And yet to that state did the present system expose the country, and must expose the country as long as it should be persevered in. Again, we had approached a state of barter in November, 1830, but, in 1832, in the month of February, the country was reduced to a position as dangerous, with regard to the monetary system, and was as close upon the brink of the total breaking down and destruction of the commercial credit of the country, in all its branches, as could possibly be. He would not detain the House longer than to remind it that he brought the subject before a Reformed House of Parliament, and he implored of it to treat it in a way suited to its vast importance. He might be told, that the subject had been often discussed and disproved; that nothing new could be advanced upon it; that a Committee of Inquiry would be useless, and a delusion, for no evidence could be adduced, and no new results arrived at. His answer was, the then Members of that House had never decided upon the question. The then Members of the House, as Representatives of the people, had never inquired into the subject. Was it or was it not their duty to do so? They heard of distress and misery from want of employment, arising from want of sufficient currency, in every quarter; and were they, he asked, the Representatives of the people, to throw aside the subject — a subject vital to the existence of thousands of the community, because they were told by those in office, or those who had been in office, that they knew no good could come of inquiry? If the Government had the information which could justify the rejection of inquiry — inquiry only be it remembered—why did they not give that information to the community? Why did they not unlock their stores, and at least give to the embarrassed, the struggling, and the starving, the melancholy consolation of knowing that relief was unattainable? But they did no such thing. The proposition had never been fairly met. Majorities had decided that there should not be inquiry, when every man must admit, that it was only in a Committee that anything like a conclusion founded upon evidence could be arrived at. But when he considered that he was addressing a House of Commons elected by the people, he could not indeed believe that the mere assertions of official men would be allowed to outweigh the prayers of millions. He could not indeed believe that the Government itself would oppose inquiry into such a matter—a matter that so deeply affected the whole commercial system of the country, and which, if from no other reason, at least from that ought not to be met by a negative. But even if the Government should take such a course, still he had a right, in the name of the suffering people of England, to call upon those who, as Ministers, had sanctioned the present system, now, as Representatives of the people, to authorise an inquiry into their doings. He looked, therefore, to the right hon. Baronet, the member for Tamworth, and appealed to him for his powerful support to assist in procuring a full and efficient inquiry. The right hon. Baronet might think the present system right? but, even if that was the case, would he be justified in opposing inquiry, and thereby saying to the people of England, that he was not merely right, but that they should have his declaration, alone and unsupported, that he was right. That right hon. Baronet had once complained, that many of the institutions of the country had become unfitted to its condition. Now, the present House of Commons, more than any other House of Commons, emanated from the great body of the people; and he appealed to the right hon. Baronet, and asked him if it were not well worth while to attempt to win back the affections of the people to those institutions that their fathers had loved, and that they themselves had been ready to sacrifice wealth, comfort, life itself, to support? If that were so, grant the inquiry. He asked the right hon. Baronet why was it that the people now for the first time viewed with doubt and a desire of change those very institutions they had ever before so much loved? Was it out of mere waywardness or caprice, or because they had proved that those institutions were in themselves bad? No such thing; it was simply because the condition of the great body of the people had been converted from one of comfort, prosperity, and ease to one of poverty, want of employment, and insecurity for property; and the great mass of the community, acting in a manner common to large bodies, attributed all the evils to those institutions immediately before them, and which alone had given them their former prosperity, and preserved them from worse evils than those which they endured. While such delusion operated it was in vain to expect the suffering people to appreciate aright the institutions of the country; and, if the Representatives of the people should still refuse inquiry, the odium generated by tremendous suffering must still fall upon the best and wisest of our institutions, till at length all would be destroyed, and the consequence nothing but increased misery. If then the right hon. Baronet and that House wished to regain for the institutions of the country the affections of the people, he called upon them to support inquiry. Let the matter be gone into fairly, fully, honestly, and then the country would at least see that, if its distress could not be relieved, its Representatives were desirous to do all in their power to afford relief. Nothing short of full and free inquiry would set the question at rest. For his part he hoped and believed that relief might be afforded to the country, and that by means not only consistent with good faith, and honesty, avoiding interference with the prosperity of the few prosperous—but at the same time of such a nature as would, by reviving general employment, enterprise, prosperity, and security, recover the minds of the people from a mistaken desire of change, and restore to the wonted place in their affections the institutions of the country. Let that be done, and he should not merely have to congratulate the House upon restored prosperity, but also upon that restoration being derived from the exertions of the first freely chosen Representatives of the people. That House would then be esteemed, not merely as the first that had been chosen by the great body of the people, but also as having, through its love of justice, and a wise determination to dive into the truth, re-attached the affections of the country to those institutions which had been the great source of its freedom, its prosperity, and its happiness. With these sentiments he begged to move, "That a Committee be appointed to inquire into the state of general distress, difficulty, and embarrassment which now presses on the various orders of the community; how far the same has been occasioned by the operation of our present monetary system; and to consider of the effects produced by that system upon the agriculture, manufacture, and commerce of the United Kingdom, and upon the condition of the industrious and productive classes."

Lord *Althorp* spoke as follows:—I do not differ, Sir, from the hon. Gentleman in the view he takes of the great importance of this question, nor do I differ from him in thinking that it is desirable that it should be brought under the consideration of the House. I think with him, too, that a question of this importance is one which this House should now decide, and should say whether they are prepared to stand by the system on which all the contracts of the country depend, or whether they are prepared to adopt a course, to use the hon. Member's own words of confiscation and robbery. If the hon. Gentleman thinks he is right in the opinion he entertains, I am not sorry that he has given a Reformed House of Parliament the opportunity of deciding it. But if I may make a criticism on him, I should say that he does not come in the most straightforward way to the decision of the question. I do not complain of the mode in which he has brought it forward; for he has most candidly pointed out what is the object of it—namely, to effect an alteration in the standard of the currency. The hon. Member, has, however, abstained from stating in what mode he would effect this, and what is the degree to which he would effect it; nor has he ventured to observe upon the consequences which must occur from an alteration such as the one he contemplates. He evidently contemplates the depreciation of the currency. There is no part of his argument that has common sense in it, if that is not his object. But even taking it to be so, he has not distinctly stated how or to what extent he would effect that depreciation. We have heard at different times different propositions brought forward with this object ultimately in view; but the proposition he desires us to agree to is, as the hon. Member declares, perfectly consistent with the public faith. It appears to me most difficult to understand this—how it is possible to have recourse to a great increase in the issue of paper, without, at the same time resorting to some other measures, as that would raise prices. In that the mode in which he purposes to raise prices, without committing any breach of the public faith? We have already had experience enough of that. We have had experience of what it is, and of what must be its necessary consequences. If the amount of currency in circulation is greatly increased, no question that the effect must be to render the value of money, as compared with other commodities, less than it was before. Though we know that in this manner we can increase the amount of currency in circulation in this country, we cannot do so in other countries, and the effect of this will be, that the sovereign will not remain here, but will pass from this country abroad, and the consequence of that will be, a run upon the bank, which must then either stop payment, or a bank restriction must follow. It is impossible but that every gentleman who reasons on this state of things must see that this would be the necessary consequence of the proposal of the hon. Member. Well, then, we come to a Bank restriction. What would be the effect of that? The hon. Member has not answered that question. He states the difficulties that have occurred in this country since 1819, but he might have gone a little further back. He seems to imagine that there was not any distress in the country before the year 1819. Yet every one knows that the distress it suffered before that period was excessively severe. The hon. Member would restore the Bank restriction system, so that every thing on which the contracts of the country now depend, would be afloat—he would place in the hands of a commercial body the power of saying what every man in the country should be worth—he would enrich one, but impoverish another. He would do that which must inevitably produce a state of confusion; and what could be the effect of that confusion but a great increase of the very calamity he now deplores? I believed that the hon. Member had had some experience and knowledge of the evils of the Bank restriction; but, from his speech, I should almost fear that I had been mistaken in the supposition. Then another plan has been proposed — namely, an alteration in the standard of the currency, but how the mere transfer of property from one class of persons to another can increase the advantage and prosperity, or improve the situation of the labouring classes, I am at a loss to know. All I know is, that the labouring classes in such a process as this are the first to suffer. Wages do not conform themselves so quickly to alterations of the standard of value as other things, and the labourer is, therefore, the first and the longest sufferer, as he still works for the same wages which he received before the alteration, while everything around him has increased in price. That was the case when the Bank restriction was first introduced, and would be the case again if that experiment should be renewed. The hon. Member then turns to another part of the subject, and seems to say that the Poor-laws were innocuous up to the year 1814. I do not agree with him in that opinion; I think the bad effect of them was felt during the period of the war. After the famine of 1801-2, the labourer lost his spirit of independence, and was driven to seek parochial relief, which continued from that period during the whole course of the war; and to say, therefore, that this took place at the beginning of the peace, is to say that which is contrary to the experience of any Gentleman who is old enough to recollect that period. Well, then, the hon. Gentleman argues for this Committee of Inquiry in this way—he says—that granting such a Committee would be a mere mockery, if we excluded from the consideration of the Committee the question of the currency. I feel, therefore, that I could not consent to the Committee, and yet exclude that question from its consideration. I agree that every Gentleman who entertains the same views as the hon. Member would complain of such a Committee as a mockery. If I wish, therefore, not to enter into the consideration of the currency, with a view to lower its standard, I must oppose granting this Committee. Among the things of which the hon. Member has spoken, and which have very much surprised me, there is one which has peculiarly produced that effect. In talking of my financial statement, the hon. Member talked of the unsatisfactory state of public credit, when there was only a surplus revenue of 500,000*l.* What remedy did the hon. Member propose? Why, to take twenty or twenty-five per cent., at once, from that surplus; and that is the mode in which the hon. Member would remedy the insecurity he supposes to exist, because the surplus revenue of the country is so small. The hon. Member asks whether we ought to borrow money to pay the interest of the public debt? To be obliged to do that certainly would be a calamity, but to say that we will not pay it at all would be even a still greater calamity, and that is a most extraordinary mode of reasoning which would go to recommend us to adopt the latter in order to avoid the former evil. The hon. Member, to show us how prosperous the country was when a depreciated currency was in existence, says that pauperism in this country was decreasing at the close of the war. Let us see how this account stands according to the amount of Poor's-rates levied at two different periods. In 1803 the amount levied was 4,113,000*l.*, while, in 1813, the amount was 4,858,000*l.* [*Mr. Attwood said something across the table.*] The hon. Member says, that this calculation was made on the comparative value of quarters of wheat, and that that accounts for some of the difference. That may be so; but still the amount is known to have gone on progressively increasing during the period I have mentioned. Pauperism then had not decreased, as the hon. Member represented, but had increased. The hon. Gentleman then said, look at the state in which the country is at this moment; and he asked whether, if any private individual were in such a state, he would not examine into his affairs, and see what were the causes that had reduced him to such a condition? I answer, that a private individual, under such circumstances, would do rightly to inquire into the state of his affairs, and into the causes which had brought him into that condition; but it would not be equally right if the private individual, in consequence of finding himself in a state of distress, should determine not to pay any of his debts, or to strike off the half of them. The hon. Member has quoted a speech, which he says I made on a former occasion with reference to this very subject, but which, I must say, I think must rather be considered as his speech than mine, for I have not the slightest recollection of having uttered the language which he attributes to me. The hon. Member has ridiculed any inquiry relative to the effect of the Poor-laws; and, he says, they have had no effect in producing the present state of the country. It does not appear to me quite so clear that the hon. Member is right in this opinion; for I cannot but think that the bad administration of the Poor-laws must have had some effect on the state of the country. It is clear that it has had in some places. No, says the hon. Member, it is not the effect of the Poor-laws or of their bad administration, or of any other cause, but it is all the effect of the state of the currency. But if this be true, how is it that the same effect has not been produced all over England? How is it that while in the north the Poor-laws have been a blessing, in the South they have been an evil; and yet the monetary system is the same in both places. I do not think that he can take this part of his speech as a triumphant argument in favour of his Motion. I do not mean to state that there is not great distress in the country; but I do believe that the statements of it have been considerably exaggerated. The hon. Member says, he will excuse exaggeration on such a topic—perhaps it may be excused; but certainly, of all men, he ought to be the first to excuse it, for he is much inclined to indulge in it, when speaking on this subject. The hon. Member has spoken of the condition of the landed interest; and I believe, at the moment I am addressing the House, the landed interest is in a worse situation than any other. I regret that I am not able to say that it is prosperous. But the fact is, that it is almost in vain, in discussing these questions in Parliament, to make any very decided statement one way or the other. I believe, with regard to every large country, that there is no state of prosperity in which considerable instances of suffering may not be found, nor any state of adversity in which considerable instances of prosperity may not be discovered. This is peculiarly the case with a country of such great and varied interests as England. I state it as my belief that the labouring agricultural population, and certain classes of the labouring manufacturing population, are suffering from distress. But I believe that, taking into consideration the amount of wages and the price of provisions and of the articles of necessary consumption, wages will now purchase more of the necessaries of life than they purchased in the period to which the hon. Member has alluded; and certainly the mode of improving the condition of the labourer, by increasing the price of the necessaries of life, is not what I should have expected from the acuteness of the hon. Member. With respect to the iron trade, to which the hon. Member has alluded, the price of iron has lately experienced some increase; and I am happy to say that the accounts I hear upon that subject, confirm that admission of the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Member says, that there has been great distress in the iron trade, and I believe that to be the fact. But what was the immediate and palpable cause of that distress? Why, from particular circumstances, there was an increase in the amount of the production beyond that of the consumption; the consequence was a glut in the market, and then distress followed. I have now stated, Sir, what must be the consequences of the adoption of the proposition for an alteration in the monetary system of the country. I leave the Members of this House to consider them. If they adopt the proposition, they must come to the determination of making an alteration in the standard of value, by which they may take from the productions of one class, and place them in the hands of another. It does not seem to me that this will be doing any good to the country. On the contrary, there must follow it a stagnation of credit and of employment, which has always been the consequence of a want of confidence; and a want of confidence such a measure must inevitably produce. The hon. Member did not allude to the depreciation of the currency in the year 1797, the consequences of which every man of sense and feeling must deeply deplore. But even with respect to that, there is a great difference between what was then done and what we are now advised to do. There is this great difference, that, in 1797, the depreciation was unintentional—it came on gradually, and the persons who effected it were not aware of its probable effects [*Mr. Cobbett said something across the table*]. The hon. member for Oldham thinks they were, but I believe they were not aware of what would be the effects of the measure of altering the standard of value. But what is the case now? If we should resort to a similar measure, we should do so with our eyes open; and, fully aware of its consequences, we should be committing a fraud on the public creditor, and enabling all debtors to pay their debts in money, amounting to less than what they really owe. Sir, it seems to me that this sudden transfer of a large mass of capital from one hand to another cannot be beneficial, but must be injurious to the labourer, and that the measure itself would tend to destroy all confidence in the country. But then the hon. Member imagines that the power of doing this has existed, and been exercised at the will of the Bank. He refers to what took place on the Bank Committee, and he states that it appeared on that Committee that the course was for the Bank to contract or to expand their issues as they thought fit. I did not hear on that Committee anything which justified such a conclusion; but, on the contrary, I understood that the course was, that the circulation should be contracted and expanded by the operations of the public upon the Bank. The hon. Member says that, while the population of the country has increased—while the industry of the people and their commerce have gone on advancing, we have a currency which does not admit of expansion. I do not understand this to be so at all. Our currency certainly has not the power of a capricious or unnatural expansion, to gratify the will or suit the fancy of any particular set of individuals; but it is the necessary consequence of this state of things, that the currency must expand as the demand for it increases. The effect of a greater demand for the currency is sure to produce a flow of bullion into the country—as the removal of water from one part of a vessel makes the fluid flow into that part from another. Such an expansion of the currency, is beneficial to all; but the forced expansion which would be the result of the hon. Member's proposition, could not lead to any but injurious consequences. It would, it must, be most injurious, if the power was in the hands of any individuals to place at their disposal the whole property of the country. I have now stated generally the grounds on which I feel that I am bound—for I will speak frankly to the hon. Member—that I am bound in duty, as an honest man, to oppose his Motion. I do not, as he is well aware, adopt this opinion, which I now utter, because I happen to be seated on this Bench. I stated it a long time since, when I sat on the other side of the House, and when I opposed the Motion of Mr. Davenport, as I considered it likely to shake the confidence of the country. If the Motion of the hon. Member be carried, every man who has a right to demand payment in gold, will do it at once; the consequence must necessarily be a run upon all the Banks infinitely more severe than that of 1825, because no establishment can be secure from it—no amount of credit—no degree of solvency in the partners of any bank—can save it from the sudden pressure of every individual, who would naturally be anxious to obtain gold currency at its present value, before that value should be reduced. I cannot conceive any calamity to the country greater than the adoption of the Motion of the hon. Member. While, however, the House rejects it, it will be desirable that it should come to some decision upon the subject of preserving our standard of value, and for this purpose I mean to move the following Amendment:—"That it is the opinion of the House, that any alteration of the monetary system of the country, which would have the effect of lowering the standard of value, would be highly inexpedient." I wish to put the question to issue in this debate, whether the House is prepared to support the present standard of value? I wish Gentlemen to have an opportunity of giving their votes upon that principle, and upon that principle clearly. I desire also to disembarrass the question of all disinclination to vote against a Committee of Inquiry, for if the Amendment be carried, the House may still, if it thinks fit, appoint a Committee of Inquiry; but before I take into consideration the fitness or unfitness of appointing such a Committee, I think it absolutely necessary, as we value the prosperity of the country —as we value the public faith, that the question I have brought to issue by the Amendment should be distinctly decided, aye or no. I do not think that the hon. Gentleman has embarrassed the subject much; he has applied himself to the monetary system very fairly; and though he has not stated any particular plan, he has admitted that his view is an alteration of the standard. I say, that if that alteration takes place, the effect will be ruinous to the country; and for this reason I should not feel myself justified if I did not give it every possible opposition. The noble Lord concluded by moving as an amendment, the Resolution he had read to the House.

Mr. *Grote* rose immediately, as he said, to second it. He never rose with greater pleasure than for this purpose, for nothing could have been proposed in which he more heartily concurred. Nothing could result from the inquiry moved by the hon. member for Whitehaven, but partial statements and crude opinions. Nobody felt a stronger sense than he did of the obligations of the House, in every practicable way, to mitigate distress; but that solemn subject ought not to be made the cloak or the stalking-horse for bringing forward peculiar and individual theories. If the Committee were appointed, the first question for investigation must be, Does this general and unprecedented distress exist? He (Mr. G.), for one, entirely denied it. Before any satisfactory answer could be given to it, the cumbrous details and complicated relations of society must be examined; but, suppose the most laborious Committee that had ever been named commenced the great subject—suppose it sat daily for a whole month, and examined 100 witnesses—could sufficient information be procured, even admitting the 100 witnesses to be well-informed, veracious, and unbiassed, to warrant a definitive report upon this wide and important topic? He felt almost ashamed to appear to treat the matter with levity; but he could not help thinking, that the proceedings of such a Committee could be compared only to the progress of some rash travellers, who, having journeyed over the United States for some three or four months—having questioned passengers in stage-coaches, and guests at *tables d'hôte*—having examined waiters, and sifted chambermaids—returned to this country, and pretended to give a full, true, and particular account of the United States and its inhabitants; dogmatising with all the conceit of would-be philosophers, and making assertions with all the confidence of long resident eye-witnesses. He was sure that the hon. member for Whitehaven proposed a course which was unsuited for any purpose but that of creating doubt and mistrust, though he felt himself relieved from going into any detailed arguments upon that point by the way in which the noble Lord had put his Amendment. He fully concurred with the noble Lord, that the Committee was only the garb which was thrown over the hon. Gentleman's projects—it was only the husk and shell which must be broken and cast away before the real import of the question could be arrived at. The hon. Gentleman's Motion contained three distinct propositions—first, that general and unprecedented distress prevailed in the country—second, that that distress arose from the contraction of the currency, and the low prices consequent on Peel's Bill—and third, that it was expedient to counteract these evils by what he (Mr. Grote) must call debasing the standard of value. On each of these points he should take the liberty of making a few remarks. The more he examined and investigated general facts—which were the only evidence upon which an opinion as to the relative amount of misery could be founded—the more did they seem to him to disprove the existence of unprecedented distress. That particular classes and interests in the country were suffering very much, he readily admitted, and he deeply lamented that it should be so—but there never was a time of which the same thing might not be predicated, and, of no time could that be more truly predicated than of the halcyon days to which the hon. member for Whitehaven had alluded. He had looked into the *Parliamentary Debates* for the year 1810, 1812, and 1814, and he could say, that the petitions then presented to Parliament attested the deepest distress, and bespoke quite as much sympathy as the statements of the hon. member for Whitehaven relative to the distress of the present period. An hon. Member of that House had moved for a return of the bankruptcies which had taken place since 1822, which return he now held in his hand. From that paper it appeared that the number of bankrupts from the 1st of January, 1822, to the 1st of January, 1832, was 19,376, being an average of 1,761 per year. In order to draw a conclusion from this document as to the comparative distress existing before and after Peel's Bill, he had added to the returns the years 1819, 1820, 1821; the number for the whole period, with the addition of those three years, being 24,714; being an annual average of 1,765 for the fourteen years. When he looked back to the interval from 1808 to 1818, he found the bankruptcies amounted to 21,609, being an annual average of 1,964; and he appealed to the House whether the less number of bankruptcies at the later period did not mark a sounder and more improved course of trade, than prior to 1819, more especially when it was considered that this annual average of 1,964 was taken from a much more contracted commercial community than we had at present—when the "London Directory" contained fifty per cent fewer commercial names, and when Manchester, Birmingham, and the other principal manufacturing towns were much smaller than at present, and when both as to population and capital, they were of less importance than at present. The noble Lord had already referred to the increase in the Poor-rates, but the figures he had stated did not precisely agree with those which he (Mr. Grote) had extracted from the Parliamentary Return. In 1803 the expenditure was 4,707,000*l.*; whereas the expenditure in 1816, 1817, and 1818, was 6,833,000*l.* He begged to compare the average expenditure of those years with the average of the three last years—1830, 1831, and 1832. It was 6,887,000*l.*, only a trifling increase of the Poor-rates, by no means in proportion to the increase of the population. In judging of the question, no fairer test could be found than that which was afforded by the condition of the people in respect to their comforts or misery; and these, he humbly submitted, could be ascertained best by looking at the amount of exports and imports, the consumption of tea, coffee, cocoa, and the other necessaries of life. These would form a criterion of the state of the people; but he must protest against deciding the question by such tests as those proposed by the hon. member for Whitehaven. He would submit, that if hon. Members were to look at the aggregate amount of the consumption of the commodities of life, the aggregate consumption of tea, coffee, sugar, &c., they would find that since the period when the hon. Member said all our distress commenced, there had been a steady increase of all the essential comforts of life. The brokers' circular showed that the consumption of all these articles had been gradually on the increase from 1825 to 1832. Hon. Members would see, that there was not one year in which there was not a steady increase over the preceding; and to admit that this was the fact, and at the same time to assert that there was a decline of prosperity, and that general distress was overwhelming the country, was an absolute contradiction of terms. The whole community, according to the hon. Member, was plunged in distress, while, at the same time, there was not only an increase of consumption, but an increase in the revenue. The evidence given before the Committee on the Bank Charter, proved, that the Bill of 1819 could not possibly be the cause of the distress, or the cause of the fall of prices, and the very evidence of the hon. member for Birmingham was any thing but consistent with the supposition that Peel's Bill could have caused the distress of which he complained. The hon. member for Birmingham was asked—'Do you think that 'the consumption of articles of luxury in 'Birmingham has decreased very much 'during that period? Terribly, in the last 'one or two years, but, perhaps, not in the 'last twelve years.—Supposing the case 'to be that the number of two-wheeled 'carriages has doubled in amount since 'that time? Fashion and extravagance 'are eccentric things. The roads have 'been wonderfully improved by Macadam- 'ization, and luxury increases beyond 'any thing, and education increases be- 'yond anything, which leads to an increase 'of expense; and I am sorry to say, that 'at Birmingham, for the last fifteen years, 'every man seems to me to have increased 'his expenses at a time when I positively 'know his fortune has been diminishing. '—If in other articles of expense there 'has been a great increase, in servants for 'instance, and in four-wheeled carriages, 'you do not say that proves anything as 'to the comfort and wealth of the inhabit- 'ants of Birmingham? Certainly not; 'there is no wealth and no comfort there, 'and there is no safety amongst manufac- 'turers or merchants, but they will, per- 'haps, not acknowledge this.—Do you 'call improved roads an increase to the 'capital of the country? Yes, but I con- 'sider the improved roads have grown out 'of the poverty of the labourers, that the 'parishes have generally been obliged to 'employ them in breaking stones for the 'roads.—If there is this increase of luxury 'in Birmingham, and this increase of ex- 'pense, and, at the same time, the capital 'and the means of the parties have dimi- 'nished in the extraordinary way you 'have stated, how have they been enabled 'to carry on this additional expense? A 'vast number of them have been totally 'ruined.' That evidence was at variance with facts. It was also at variance, with all general reasoning and what the hon. Member must know, if he had maturely considered the question. It was inconsistent with human nature to predicate of any community that what might cause distress or prosperity had actually caused it without taking into account every circumstance that had operated to counteract it. For his part, he must take it for granted, from the hon. Member's own evidence, that the decay of Birmingham was not such as he had described—and he could not give him credit for his knowledge of the state of trade in that place; because, if he had a complete knowledge of it, he could not have asserted what was contradicted by the evidence of his own senses. He must assert that, as the aggregate consumption of comforts and necessaries had been on the increase, the fair inference was, that there had been an increase instead of a diminution of the comforts of the people. He objected also to the mode in which the hon. member for Whitehaven had endeavoured to account for the fall of prices since 1818. He objected entirely to his theory of prices during the war, and the low range of prices which prevailed at present. If the hon. Member's theory were correct, that the range of prices at any precise time depended on the magnitude of the Bank circulation, prices for the last seven years ought to have been as high as they were from 1808 to 1815, during the last seven years of the war, and much higher than they were prior to 1808. If hon. Members would examine the amount of the Bank circulation since 1819, they would find that, taking the notes of *5l.* and upwards, there was not only no diminution, but a positive increase, of paper circulation as compared to the period between 1808 and 1815, when commodities were as high as the hon. Member could desire. He took the notes above *5l.*, at the various periods, as the fair way of ascertaining the actual amount of circulation, because the smaller notes had since been replaced by sovereigns, and because the hon. Member in his speech in 1822 referred to this very same standard of comparison in proof of his own theory respecting the prices of that year. In the appendix to the late Report on the Bank Charter, the document, No. 82, contains a statement of the average amount of Bank notes in circulation during every quarter of the year from 1805 to 1832, distinguishing the notes of *5l.* and upwards from those under *5l.*, where hon. Members would find that the number of bank notes of *5l.* and upwards, during the last six years, had positively exceeded the number of the same amount, during the war prices from 1808 to 1814: viz.

Notes of Five Pounds and Upwards.

1808 to 1818 inclusive. Average.	£	1822 to 1832 inclusive. Average.	£
1808	13,008	1822	16,824
1809	14,022	1823	18,033
1810	15,917	1824	19,676
1811	15,875	1825	19.679
1812	15,868	1826	21,067
1813	16,068	1827	20,966
1814	17,909	1828	20,645
1815	17,659	1829	19,298
1816	17,582	1830	20,174
1817	20,302	1831	18,008
1818	19,737	1832	17,739
	11)183,947		11)212,109
Average	16,722	Average	19,282

Years of Highest Circulation prior to 1819.	£	Years of Highest Circulation from 1822 to 1832.	£
1816	17,582	1826	21,067
1817	20,302	1827	20,966
1818	19,737	1828	20,645
	3)57,621		3)62,678
Average	19,207	Average	20,892

Year of Highest Circulation before 1819.	£	Year of Highest Circulation between 1822 and 1832.	£
1817	20,302	1826	21,067

Year of Lowest Circulation between 1808 and 1818.	£	Year of Lowest Circulation between 1822 and 1832.	£
1808	13,008	1832	16,824

Take the comparison upon what principle the House pleased, it showed that the circulation of the Bank of England had been much larger during the period since the passing of Mr. Peel's Bill, which he (Mr. Grote) would take leave to call a period of increased prosperity. If, therefore, it were true, as he contended it was not, that the prices of commodities could be determined by looking at the quantity of bank notes in circulation, there ought to be a range of much higher prices between 1822 and 1832 than during any period of the war. In speaking of the monetary system as the cause of low prices, the hon. Member had entirely overlooked the important fact, that there never had been a period at which money could be so easily borrowed, or when the rate of interest was so low as during the year to which he especially referred. Whenever any man had tolerable security to offer, he could obtain money with the utmost facility—a state of things it would be difficult to show existing during the war. He was ready to admit, that there was suffering; but that did not arise from Peel's Bill. He might be asked, then, how did it happen that prices were so low now as compared to prices during the war? He would answer, if they examined successively the principal articles of production, and compared the price of them with the price during the war, they would find that there was scarcely one of them which was not produced at a less cost, which was amply sufficient to account for the greater part of that decline which had taken place in the price. During the war the causes of scarcity and dearness were all brought to bear on commodities at once—a difference between gold prices and paper prices—an unusual number of bad seasons and unheard-of difficulties of importation, arising from war, so as to increase the freight and charges ten times what they had been in later times. During the last ten or twelve years most of these causes had ceased, the seasons had been generally good, and the means of transport between country and country had been quickened and facilitated to a degree before unknown. The prevalence, too, of undisturbed tranquillity, the improvements in sciences and the increased international communication, had all contributed to bring into operation new means of production, and new localities, which had not been turned to account before. He maintained that the cause which upheld prices so much from 1802 to 1816 was not the Bank restriction, but the difficulty of production; and he was further prepared to show, that the fall of prices since 1819 was owing to causes connected with supply and demand. If hon. Members would take the trouble to examine how stocks of various commodities had increased when the obstructions of the war were removed, they would see at once sufficient cause for the fall in prices without imputing to Peel's Bill any more than a very slight effect of the same kind. As an illustration he would refer shortly to the increase in the stock of the great staple article cotton, according to the circular of the brokers. The hon. Member quoted the following document:—

General Import of Cotton into Great Britain from 1817 to 1826 inclusive, the quantity taken for Export and Home Consumption, and the Stock remaining at the close of each Year.

	1817.	1818.	1819.	1820.	1821.
Packages exported	32,600	60,100	66,770	27,540	52,600
Taken for Home Consumption .	412,500	417,500	432,600	490,900	491,650
Stock at the close of each year .	113,000	307,700	353,700	406,700	354,320
	1822.	**1823.**	**1824.**	**1825.**	**1826.**
Packages exported	60,010	35,380	53,100	75,520	95,000
Taken for Home Consumption .	541,850	534,390	639,100	565,430	559,660
Stock at the close of each year .	285,500	385,800	235,360	415,660	342,500

From this it was clear that the quantity imported was greater than the market could take off; and that of itself would be a sufficient cause for depreciating the price. The great increase of the import of cotton it was easy to account for, if they looked at the vast quantities raised in Egypt, in the East, and above all in the United States of America. He could point out other articles of consumption which had increased in a similar proportion; but he was afraid of wearying the House; and he should conclude the remarks he had to make, with one or two observations on the argument of the hon. Member, for rectifying (as he expressed it) the currency. Such a measure as that he would strenuously oppose to the last; and he was sure that no Parliament, reformed or unreformed, would ever consent to such immorality. An artificial rise of prices would make a vast change in all contracts. It would benefit those only whose debts exceeded their credits—those who owed to others more than others owed to them. He could not conceal from himself the resemblance between this proposal and a state of things described in the Gospel. It was said of the unjust Steward—‘ So he called every one of his Lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my Lord?

‘ And he said an hundred measures of oil: And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write down fifty.

‘ Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said an hundred measures of wheat: And he said unto him, Take thy Bill, and write four score.’

Such a measure as that proposed by the hon. Member would have the effect of making a similar reduction. When 100*l.* was due, 50*l.* would, in fact, be paid. That was the sum and substance of the object proposed by the hon. member for Whitehaven; and he put it to the House whether, consistently with sound and rational legislation—whether, consistently with principles of integrity and justice, they could ever lend themselves to such a change in all the pecuniary transactions of the country? The House had been told that it would remedy distress; but surely those who maintained this opinion had not looked carefully to the consequences of the proceeding. Who, he would ask, would refrain from consuming his substance—who would endeavour to save for his family—if the Legislature might thus on every occasion interfere to rob him of the fruits of his industry? If any hon. Member had a specific proposition to make regarding the currency—if he could point out any mode of making it more effectual for its legitimate purpose, he should be ready to listen; but he maintained that it would be a flagrant abuse of legislative supremacy to apply its power intentionally either to lower or elevate prices. It would be a gross abuse of the trust reposed in a Reformed Parliament, and he for one would never consent to it.

Mr. *Cobbett* spoke to the following effect:—Before I speak on the Motion before the House, I shall beg leave to allude to what fell from the hon. Member for the City, who is one of my Representatives. The hon. Member took much pains to show that all the Acts of Parliament relative to altering the value of money, and about issuing the one-pound notes, and preventing the issue of them, of which the hon. member for Whitehaven spoke at such length—had no effect at all. That they neither raised nor lowered prices, and were of no consequence. The hon. Member said something about supply and demand regulating the quantity of money, and made it out that the Acts of Parliament had no effect at all. But I remember soon after the passing of the celebrated Bill of the very celebrated Baronet on my right hand, that prices fell so low that the Parliament made haste to pass a Bill to put a stop to it. That Bill had hardly passed when prices rose again, and continued to rise till the system came to an end in 1825 and 1826. Then the Bill was passed to put a stop to the issue of one and two pound notes, and prices fell and continued to fall. At that time I presented a petition to this House. I highly approved of the return to payment in the King's coin, and of absolutely putting an end to the dirty, infamous paper money; but I besought the House, if it passed that Bill, to reduce the expenses of the country, and I told the House that if it did pass the Bill and did not reduce taxation, it would, as sure as fire burns, bring such ruin on this country as no state had ever experienced. My Representative, however, in such reasoning as he used, stated that he could not support the proposition of the hon. member for Whitehaven. He called it immoral, and a robbery, and referred to Holy Writ, and said it was like telling a man to take his bill and write down 50*l.* instead of 100*l.*—that it was cheating; and yet he says that the Acts regulating the issue of paper money have had no effect at all. My hon. Representative must review his political philosophy. There is another opinion which I have heard to-night equally wrong, and of a more dangerous description, and it is not the less dangerous because it has been generally adopted by the Gentlemen who have occupied the Bench opposite. The noble Lord (Lord Althorp) has in part adopted the plan. The argument was, that in the same proportion as sugar and coffee, for example, were consumed, in that same proportion were the people well off and happy. How?—How was this consumption ascertained? By the amount of the tax; so that in proportion as the people paid taxes they were said to be well off. They would be better off then if they had more taxes to pay. Supposing the tax the same and the amount of population the same, the increased quantity consumed is known by the increased revenue. The greater the quantity consumed therefore the more tax is paid, and the happier are the people. There are many things to be considered in this statement. I can show that the population remaining the same, and the rate of the tax the same, that the increased amount of the tax may be taken as a proof that the population of the country is increasing in misery. How can I show this? Suppose the tax to be laid on sugar—soldiers like sugar; though, perhaps, I should make the case clearer if I were to take something the soldiers like better than sugar, and which goes down the throat somewhat easier—but I will take sugar. Now, you raise an army of 100,000 men, and you tax the industrious people to pay that 100,000 men. You give the taxes to the soldiers, and the soldiers buy sugar instead of the people, and the amount of the tax may be the same or greater than before. But the more soldiers you have, and the more sugar they consume, the greater will be the demands on the people—the greater will be the amount of the revenue derived from sugar, and the more miserable the tax-payers. It is of great importance that this argument should be set aside if it can be. If you take away from the industrious people, and give to the idle, you may go on increasing the revenue which the idle consumers yield, but you give to the idle in the place of the industrious; and, while the amount of the revenue is increased, you increase the misery of the industrious people. I shall now state that I intend to vote for the Motion of the hon. member for Whitehaven, though his doctrine may be wrong. I am not of the same opinion as the hon. member for Whitehaven as to money; but that is not the question. The proposition is, to go into a Committee of Inquiry; that is all. It is nothing but for an inquiry. It is said that the people will take fright if the House inquire. What, will they be frightened if we inquire into nothing but the state of their distress and its causes, including, amongst others, the changes which have been made in the money of the country, and the effects of Acts which have been passed for regulating the issue of Bank notes in that distress? What can be more proper than to inquire into the changes in the money? It has been tossed up and down several times. Parliament has meddled with it over and over again, and the people want to know the facts of the case. If the people now have their own Representatives, why should they not inquire into why this was done, and for what purpose it was done, and into its consequences? Nothing can be more proper. We are not bound to agree to the remedy proposed by the hon. member for Whitehaven. I quite agree with him as to the causes of the distress, but I do not assert, that enough has not been said about paper money as the remedy. There is another mode of going to work. The Ministers must either cut down the taxes, or they must put up the money. I should in the Committee propose to cut down the taxes. When the Bill was before the House in 1826, I said it would work mischief, and it has not done its work yet. I then declared that it would be confiscation, and end in ruin. The hon. member for Essex, as he no doubt remembers, said in 1819, that the evil was only in the transition from paper to gold, only during the progress of the change, during the time we were going from the paper; and that when we had got the gold we should have no more inconvenience. Well, we have got the gold; but we have not got to the end of our inconveniences. If we go on as we have been going, we shall go on to the ruin of the country; we shall bring down the middle classes to that state in which the lowest class now is. I am satisfied that, ere long, there will be fifty houses to be let in Fleet-street—there are already thirty-six unlet—and no tenants to be had; and the rents must be reduced to one quarter of what they are at present. The rents are at present not one-half what they were ten years ago, when, instead of there being thirty-six houses to choose from, a man had to wait five years for the chance of a vacancy. The noble Lord is not aware of the state of the middle classes. He hears only flatterers, and they tell him nothing but flattery. I would have prevented the passing of the Bill which occasioned this. I presented a petition against it; I asserted that if you did not reduce taxation to the standard of 1792, you would produce ruin and misery to the kingdom, such as had never been seen. I told you that then, and you laughed then as you laugh now. You always did laugh. There is a time to laugh, and a time to weep; and if you laugh now, you may weep hereafter. I differ from the hon. Member as to the remedy: I agree with him as to the cause of the distress; I stand up for gold, but I am for the reduction of taxes to the standard of 1792; I want the taxes reduced to the amount of the taxes in 1792. That is the remedy. I am not for that reduction which was called the Budget. I am not for taking off 100,000*l*. of taxes. Was a Reformed Parliament wanted for that? The people wanted a Reformed Parliament for what I propose. They recollect how happy the country was in 1792—how she was bounding forward in the career of prosperity, though she had just come out of a disastrous war—the most disastrous war she had ever encountered, and yet she was prosperous. The fleet had been reduced, but Spain offended England, and Pitt fitted out an armament to make Spain submit. That war was called the Catskin war. England was then dreaded by all around her. She was armed at all points and ready to assert her power and this was at the end of a disastrous war. When the northern Powers formed a coalition against her, called the armed neutrality, she was ready to meet all the great Powers combined. And what did all this great force cost then? I dare say the House will hardly believe it when I state it; the Army the Navy, the whole expense of the Ordnance and all in 1792, was only 4,226,943*l.* or half a million less than the navy alone now costs. And what is this for? This is what the people expect the Ministers to account for. They do not want a miserable Budget, with a few pounds of savings; they want to know why you do not reduce the expenses down to those of 1792. The debt then was 9,000,000*l.*, and the whole expenditure was 15,000,000*l.*, rather less than what our Navy, Army, Ordnance, and other things now cost. Our present condition too, is the result of twenty-two years of glorious war—not at the end of a disastrous war—but at the end of a war which was to give us "indemnity for the past, and security for the future;"—at the end of a war into which the Spencers and the Portlands and the Fitzwilliams drove Mr. Pitt, to get indemnity for the past and security for the future. "Go on," said old George Rose "only carry it through, and at the peace you will be sure to have indemnity for the past, and security for the future." Our debt is now 28,000,000*l.* a-year. I would not take off one penny of the debt. I do not want to make an equitable adjustment—though till an equitable adjustment be made by the prices of 1819, justice will not be done—and that is necessary even for the safety of the fundholders themselves. Our debt, which is now 28,000,000*l.*, was then 9,000,000*l.*: 18,000,000*l.* are now required for carrying on the affairs of the country, which Pitt carried on for 6,000,000*l.* The people want to know the reason for the difference. They care nothing about the driblets of the Budget—nothing about the monetary system; they want their burthens taken off; and they want to know why the affairs of the country cannot be carried on now as cheaply as they were in 1792? What makes the difference? Why do we want 18,000,000*l.* now, when in 1792 only 6,000,000*l.* were required? Because it has been required to augment the plunder which the aristocracy take from the people. The people grudge the Navy nothing. They would sell the shirts off their backs rather than the Navy should not be rewarded; but that is no reason why the money should be squandered. I will show you how this is done. You shall hear. In 1792, Pitt had forty-four admirals—we have 170. And the right hon. Baronet, the First Lord of the Admiralty, admitted, the other day, that the Navy was not in as great force now as it was in 1792, yet we have 170 admirals and Pitt had only forty-four. What is that for? Pitt had 620 captains and commanders; but ours is a glorious time, for the noble Lord has got 1684, and what is more, he has got 110 men who have been made admirals since the peace, and 400 men who have been made captains since the peace. And why have they been made? Why some of them have been made, that the two sons of Earl Grey may be placed over the heads of brave and deserving officers [*Marks of disapprobation.*] Oh! that is unfashionable. It is not good—it is not good behaviour. Well, I beg your pardon that I let it out. We have one commissioned officer to every five seamen and marines; we have one post captain to every fourteen seamen and marines; and we have one admiral to every 125 seamen and marines. Glorious country! Let us be proud of it. In 1792, Pitt's Board of Admiralty, and other officers, cost 58,000*l.*; now ours costs 147,000*l.* What is that wanted for? The people ask that. It is only to take money out of their pockets, and put it into the pockets of the others. Half-pay, pensions, and allowances to the Navy, at present are 1,625,000*l.*; as much as Pitt's whole Navy cost, except about 359,000*l.* What is that for? [Sir *James Graham*: No, No.] I ask again, what is that for? And I say that the people want to know that; and they want, not paper money, but justice. Do justice to the people—cut down the expenditure, or raise up the money—and it will be perfectly right. The right hon. Baronet, the First Lord of the Admiralty, moved the other day for the wages of 22,500 seamen and marines, and the sum was 687,000*l.*; but the hon. Baronet showed, though that was when he was out of office, that 113 Privy Councillors sacked 650,000*l.* amongst them — 113 Privy Councillors get as much as maintain all the seamen and marines. There are some old women on the pension-list who receive more than all the seamen and marines, with their bedding, baggage, food and all. These are the things which the people want to have reduced. The scholastic distinctions of my hon. Representative about the value of money are too refined for them—they do not understand the matter; but they understand that they pay too much. Why should they pay more than in 1792, exclusive of the debt? They do not ask to touch that, though a right hon. Baronet whom I see opposite, proposed to reduce it thirty per cent. I do not put confidence in the right hon. Baronet—I have never done that. I must here say, that the War-office accounts are well kept, compared to those of other offices; but the Navy Estimates are the most confused things possible. A poor Member of Parliament cannot understand them. The mode of making out the Estimates of 1792, in which every name was inscribed was much preferable. That was the manner in which the Estimates were drawn up in Pitt's time, before he was corrupted by the Whigs, who drove him into a war for indemnity and security. The Secretary at War has, I see, 214 persons on his list, as retired from his office. The Deputy Secretary at War has retired on a pension of 2,500*l.* I hope the Gentleman has got a good constitution. There are 214 clerks on the retired list; but all the *employés* and clerks of the office are only thirty-three; and these 214 persons have pensions for their lives, costing the country no less than 51,000*l.* Why should they swallow up the property of the people? They served but a short time, and were well paid during the time of their service. Nobody can say, that this is right. I remember a few nights ago, when I was speaking against the practice of the Justices, who were game preservers themselves, banishing men for poaching that the hon. and learned Gentleman, the member for Hull, took me to task, and, using some learned words, accused me—*ad captandum vulgus*—of flattering the mob. He said, that it was flattering the mob to say that it was not right that men should be banished or hanged by Justices who were game preservers; but in spite of its being again said that I flatter the mob, I must assert, that it is not right to make the people pay 58,000*l.* to those people who were well paid while they served them. One is put out that another may be put in; and after the one who is put in lounges into the offices, picks his teeth, and reads the newspaper for a year or two, he is placed on the retired list to make way for another. I wanted the names of these retired men, as I wanted the names of the stamp distributors, but I could not get them. If I had the names I could show in what manner the people are robbed, and who rob them; but not having the names I can only guess at it. I will not detain the House. I will only add this one remark. If the affairs of this country had been managed since the peace in 1814, as they were managed in 1792, and the taxes had remained the same, and we had paid every farthing of the interest of the debt, the noble Lord would not have brought forth such a Budget as that of the other night; but we should have paid off 260,000,000*l.* of the principal of the debt since the peace. Calculating the rate of compound interest, as we might on this payment, it would have amounted to 400,000,000*l.*; and if the aristocracy had paid their proper proportion of the taxes we might have paid off 600,000,000*l.* of the debt. I will vote for going into the Committee. There has been robbery—there has been plunder, that is admitted on all sides; and is there nobody responsible for it? The noble Lord says, that if we committed an error in 1819, that is no reason why we should commit another now. But if an error has been committed—if a monstrous piece of injustice has been practised—are we not to inquire into who committed it? If we are not, it will come to this, that there is nobody responsible for such wrong. Does the responsibility of office only mean responsible for getting the salary? I will sit down, thanking the House for the attention with which it has heard me; which has been, I can assure it, greater than I expected.

Mr. *Richards* would not attempt to follow the hon. member for Oldham through his amusing, but somewhat discursive speech, nor would he go into an examination of his opinions; but there were two of them which he could not pass entirely unnoticed;—one was, that we should no longer use paper money—another that we should enter into what he called an equitable adjustment with the public creditor. The first satisfied him that the hon. Member did not understand the nature and effects of paper money; the other would inevitably lead to the destruction of public credit, and to confiscation and plunder, revolution and blood. The noble Lord (Lord Althorp) in replying to the hon. member for Whitehaven, implied that similar dreadful consequences would result from the success of his hon. friend's Motion. If he rightly understood his hon. friend's proposition, it was—that robbery, confiscation, and fraud, having been perpetrated upon one class of the people of England by the Bill of 1819, commonly termed Mr. Peel's Bill, he called on the House and the Government to inquire into the extent of this injury and fraud, and into the manner in which wrongs of such magnitude could best be redressed and remedied. The noble Lord seemed disinclined to grant a Committee to inquire into the effect of Mr. Peel's Bill, from the fear that such an inquiry might excite alarm; but, surely, that was taking a very narrow view of the subject. He would observe, that the Bill of 1819 was improperly called by the name of the right hon. Baronet, the member for Tamworth. It should rather bear the name of the late Earl of Liverpool, for he was the author of it. The right hon. Baronet had returned, a short time previous to the introduction of this Bill, into Parliament, from Ireland; and although he had not then had much experience either of monetary, financial, or commercial matters, yet, being a man of acknowledged talents, and an accomplished and eloquent speaker, the Bill had been put into his hands in the belief that he could carry it through the House of Commons with better success than the then Chancellor of the Exchequer. He well recollected hearing from the Gallery of that House, the speech of the right hon. Baronet when he introduced that Bill; and saying to an hon. friend of his, formerly a Member of that House, "that the harp of Orpheus was not more charming than his manner; but that, as to his matter, he appeared not to know anything whatever of the subject on which he had been speaking." That had been his opinion, when the right hon. Baronet delivered his speech, and he had since seen no reason to alter it. In saying this, he meant no disrespect to the right hon. Baronet. In common with the House and the country, he admired his great and splendid talents—but he appeared in 1819, not to have paid that attention to the nature and effects of our monetary system, which, no doubt, he had done since. His hon. friend, the member for Whitehaven, had now come forward with a proposition, the object of which was to inquire into the effect this Bill of Lord Liverpool's had had in producing the difficulties and distress under which the country now suffered, in order, if possible, to afford that relief which was imperiously required. That was the plain and simple object of his hon. friend. In refusing this inquiry, from the fear of exciting alarm, the noble Lord seemed to take a very narrow view of the subject. But before he adverted more particularly to the speech of the noble Lord, he must speak of the great change which had taken place in the currency of the country in 1797, and the still greater effected, in 1819, by Lord Liverpool's Bill. The measure of 1797 was defended on the ground of necessity; but whether necessary or not, it led progressively to a large increase of the circulating medium. It was well known that the taxes of the war could never have been imposed and levied but for this increase in the quantity of money. The relations, also, between property and money were quite changed. And the question in 1819, ought not to have been, whether it was practicable to return to the standard of money which existed before 1797, but whether with reference to the circumstances in which the country was placed in 1819, after having departed for twenty-two years from that standard, we could, with safety to the interests of property, and with justice to the people of England, return to it. In the inquiry which was instituted by Parliament into the effect of the Bank restriction on the value of money, not the slightest reference was made as to the effects which the Act of 1819 might have on the country, on the public debt, and on private debts, and taxes! He had repeatedly warned the Government of the fatal consequences that would result from the Bill. But the difference between the market price of gold and the Mint price was declared to be the measure of the depreciation of the currency; and as this difference was not more than three or four per cent, it was thought of no importance. If the Government had supposed the depreciation to be thirty or forty per cent, they would never have attempted to return to the old standard. During the debate on the Bill in the House of Commons, he had met the late Mr. Ricardo in the lobby, and on telling him that the Bill had been argued on the assumption, that the depreciation in the value of money was not more than three per cent, but that he (Mr. Richards) calculated it to be 33⅓ per cent, that eminent man said—"If I thought so, Sir, I would not vote for the Bill." An hon. friend of his, many years a Member of the House, had assured him, that Mr. Ricardo, a short time only before his death, acknowledged to him, that he was convinced, that the depreciation was from twenty to twenry-five per cent, and that he regretted the error he had fallen into. [*Call of* "*Question.*"] If it were the pleasure of the House not to hear him, he should bow to its decision; but he would not be put down by the clamour of an individual. The hon. Member might leave the House. In the discussion on the Irish Disturbances Bill, three or four hon. Members interrupted him by similar cries of "Question;" and an hon. friend of his was told on asking them if they had any dislike to the hon. member for Knaresborough? was answered, "oh no; we only want some fun." If the hon. Member was one of those who wished for "fun," he had better seek it out-of-doors. If Lord Liverpool's Bill increased the value of money between thirty and forty per cent, and, consequently, made this difference, to the disadvantage of debtors, in all contracts which had been entered into, as well as in the taxes and in the public debt; was not this sufficient ground for inquiry? If the landed, the manufacturing, and the commercial interests were all distressed, ought not this House to inquire into the causes of that distress? Was not the book, published by the Poor Law Commissioners, which proved the existence of deep and extensive distress amongst the labouring classes, matter for serious inquiry? The noble Lord said, if you alter the standard, you will occasion confiscation and robbery. Considering the time which had elapsed since 1819, he was not at all disposed to advocate a return to the value of money at that period; nor was he sure, that great relief might not be given without any alteration whatever of the present standard. He wished for inquiry; and, therefore, would give his support to the Motion of the hon. member for Whitehaven. If he should have the honour of being one of the Members of a Committee of Inquiry, or if he should be examined as a witness, he should be able to suggest certain regulations by which, without any alteration in the standard, all classes in the community would be benefitted. But how could the noble Lord, for a moment, charge his hon. friend with wishing to introduce a measure which would lead to spoliation and robbery. When that noble Lord voted for the Bill of 1819, no matter on which side of the House he sat, he supported a measure which had occasioned greater robbery, and plunder, and confiscation, than any other single measure which ever received the sanction of a Government or a Legislature on the face of the earth. The hon. member for the City, part of whose speech only he had had the honour to hear, had said that money could be procured with great facility at a low rate of interest, and therefore, that money was sufficiently plentiful. The inference he (Mr. Richards) drew from the low rate of interest was, that there was only a low rate of profit. If the rate of interest were high, it would be a proof that profits were high, and trade prosperous. And the converse of this was true. Now, was low interest so much a proof of the superabundance of money as that, for some cause or other, it could not be profitably employed? The hon. Gentleman denied that there was any depreciation to anything like the extent which had been stated; and he had cited, as a reason for his opinion, the amount of Bank notes at different periods. But, not only were the hon. Member's figures wrong, but he had forgotten altogether to notice the circulation of the country bankers. The noble Lord admitted that injustice was done by the measure of 1819; but he asked whether we should not do injustice to another class of persons by reverting to the former system? But no one wished to revert to the former system. The noble Lord seemed not aware of the great and important difference there was in altering the standard, between altering it in favour of the productive classes, and the unproductive. Nor did he at all take into consideration the amount of the public debt and the taxes; and, in this way, the injury which had been inflicted on the people of England. No doubt the noble Lord deserved praise for the candid manner in which he had stated his Budget; but after all his endeavours to relieve the country from the load of taxation, what relief was he able to give us? He had in his Budget, estimated the amount of the revenue at about forty-six millions; which, including the charge of collection, would exact in taxes from the country fifty millions. This sum was as great a burthen on the people now, as double the amount would have been during the war —in money of that period. Mr. Mushett, in his elaborate work, estimated the depreciation of the currency, when at its highest point, at between forty and fifty per cent. Assuming the depreciation to have been fifty per cent (and he had no doubt it was more) then, notwithstanding the reduction in the nominal amount of taxes, which the noble Lord had effected, the pressure of taxation which the people had now to bear was equal, in money of the war value, to one hundred millions. Was it then to be wondered at, that the people felt distressed—that they found the greatest difficulty in paying the taxes? But some hon. Gentlemen asserted that the currency was in a sound state, and that every facility was afforded to pecuniary transactions. Nothing was further from the fact. Country bankers were now required to pay their notes, on demand, in gold, both in the country and in London. They were obliged, therefore, to keep a stock of gold both in the country and in town. To say nothing of the hardship of this, it was clear, that it greatly lessened, not only the amount of capital in circulation, but impeded the free action of it. If an inquiry were instituted, this difficulty might be easily obviated. But, did the nobility, the gentry, and the clergy of England, at this moment feel quite secure? and, why did they not? Because the laborious and industrious classes were discontented. Because they were suffering distress. Was it possible that hon. Gentlemen could have seen the destruction of farming produce, by fire, in different parts of the country, without alarm?—

> You make me strange,
> Even to the disposition that I owe.
> When now I think you can behold such sights,
> And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,
> When mine are blanched with fear.

And were not these things matters to be inquired into? He felt no little anxiety lest the discontent he had described should change into disaffection. Again, what was the state of the rest of Europe? Distress and discontent prevailed very generally on the Continent, and it was a question of some interest, how far other nations were suffering by the withdrawal from their circulation of the large amount of the precious metals, which we had substituted here for paper. Much of the distress in France was owing to the drain from that country of specie occasioned by our return to a metallic circulation. And, although hon. Gentlemen might smile, he considered it probable that the remote cause of the French revolution in 1830, the immediate cause of which was the distress of the working people, was the change made by us in the value of money. It was clear that the dissatisfaction manifested towards Louis Phillippe was owing to the misery and destitution of the labouring and industrious classes. And it was distinctly foretold that the Bill of 1819, by raising the value of money, would cause distress to pervade every nation in the civilized world. As to England, not only were the labouring people in distress, but the state of the middle class was one of great and increasing difficulty and suffering. Their capital was diminished and diminishing. In many instances, persons were paying their rent and taxes out of their capital; and, if something was not done, ruin must ensue. That very morning he had talked to three respectable tradesmen, who all agreed in stating that the distress now experienced by the middle class was greater than ever before. One of these persons was a grocer; and he stated "that, some years ago, he sold more goods on a Saturday, than he now did all the week." Another, an Ironmonger, said, "I can assure you, Sir, that one third of the people that work at my trade are out of employment." The third, a Baker, said, "I am now obliged to give credit much longer and to a much larger amount, than I formerly did, and I find the greatest difficulty in getting paid." Under these circumstances, the hon. member for Whitehaven had only done his duty in bringing forward his Motion for inquiry; and the noble Lord might have spared those remarks which he made on that hon. Gentleman for having submitted his proposition to the House. He trusted that his hon. friend would not be deterred from the discharge of his duty by any attacks that might be made on him either in that House or elsewhere: and above all, that he would disregard the malignant and unfounded abuse heaped upon him by a certain portion of the press. Any individual who doubted the prevalence of great distress, he would refer to the extracts from the Reports of the Poor Law Commissioners. In the volume which contained those extracts would be found a picture of distress enough to touch the heart of any man. He had read that volume throughout; and it confirmed completely the view taken of the state of the country by his hon. friend. It showed that the condition of the labouring poor was one of the greatest privation and distress; and that this distress was gradually extending itself, and absorbing the middle class. In those districts (for instance, in Kent and Sussex) where wages had been suffered to fall to the level at which they barely afforded the means of supporting existence, incendiary fires and the destruction of property had taken place. The noble Lord and the hon. member for the City said, that the hon. member for Whitehaven had brought forward no definite plan. His hon. friend had, no doubt, exercised a sound discretion by not stating details. He had proved that there was great distress; he had shown what he considered the causes of that distress; and he asked for an inquiry, in order to discover some adequate remedy. He (Mr. Richards) would not, however, hesitate to point out, particularly, in what manner the acknowledged distress, might, without any alteration of the standard, be alleviated. From 1797, to the present time, the mines of South America and of the rest of the world had produced a less quantity of the precious metals than they did formerly. Whether nature had become more niggard of her supply, or whether less capital was employed in the mines, he would not then stop to inquire; but it was an undoubted fact, that the amount of the precious metals annually brought into the market of the world, had diminished; and, consequently, their exchangeable value would, other things remaining the same, be enhanced. But other things were not the same. To say nothing of the immense increase in the number and magnitude of those transactions which the precious metals served to exchange, there could be no doubt that, during the war, when wealth was augmenting and luxury abounding, there was a great increase in the use of gold and silver articles, both for personal ornament and domestic service. In the Act of 1819, no regard whatever was had to any of these circumstances; nor was any attention paid either to the magnitude of the public debt, or to private debts. If any inquiry had been made into these circumstances, it would have been seen that the standard sought to be introduced in 1819, was not the same standard as that of 1797, but that gold itself had increased in value. Was it, then, either just or safe to seek to introduce a standard of increased value, compared with that of 1797? And was it fair to charge the hon. member for Whitehaven with wishing to act dishonestly, because he called upon the House to inquire how it could correct the greatest monetary error ever committed, and do tardy justice to those who were suffering from that error? By this tremendous error, all the productive classes of the community suffered. It first occasioned losses to the merchant and manufacturer; it was now ruining the farmer, and pauperizing the labourer; but it would finally impoverish and destroy the landowner. He had said that he would bring under the attention of the House a plan which without altering the standard, would alleviate the existing distress. He quite agreed with the hon. members for Whitehaven and Oldham in their opinion of the fatal effects of the Bill of 1819. But he differed altogether from the hon. member for Oldham as to his remedy. If Irish bank notes and English country bank notes were made payable, not in gold, but in notes of the Bank of England, all the large sums kept in gold by 700 or 800 country bankers would be set at liberty. There need only be one dépôt of gold—namely, the Bank of England. The Bank of England might be allowed to issue 1*l.* and 2*l.* notes, but not the country bankers, who should be restricted from issuing notes below 5*l.*; for this reason, that notes of a lower denomination were commonly held by the labouring class; and if a country banker should fail, great distress and inconvenience, if he issued 1*l.* notes would follow. Sovereigns might be dismissed altogether from the circulation, and the Bank of England should be compelled to pay its notes, on demand, in gold ingots, to any amount not less than 25*l.* Threats had been uttered of a run for gold, and he had seen placards to the same effect on the walls of the metropolis. The plan he had suggested would effectually put a stop to popular panics, to which, in moments of excitement, the present monetary system was exposed, and which panics might lead to the most deplorable results. The paper money would be always kept at its just value by the exchanges; because, if the Bank should issue more paper than the business of the country required, such paper so issued would fall in value, and merchants would immediately demand gold bars. These regulations, in suggesting which he would lay no claim to originality, because they were, for the most part, recommended by Mr. Ricardo, would give great relief. But if they should not be sufficient, then, on the principle mentioned by Lord Grey, "*Nemo tenetur ad impossibile*," he would recommend that the standard should be lowered one per cent per annum till the country were restored to prosperity. In the mean time he should vote for the Motion of the hon. member for Whitehaven, for which that hon. Member had stated unanswerable reasons. The House would not do their duty either to themselves, to the people, or to the Sovereign, unless they resolved forthwith, to institute a full and efficient inquiry.

Mr. *Forster*, as a country banker, begged leave to reject the indulgence proposed for the class to which he belonged by the hon. member for Knaresborough, of being allowed to tender Bank of England paper in payment of their notes, instead of gold. He knew that the sure way to create an avidity for gold was to place an impediment in the way of obtaining it. A feeling of pride, too, would be apt to deter him from issuing notes which were not convertible into gold at the will of the holder. The information he had acquired as to the opinions of the great mass of the people—the operative classes—led him to think that their opinions were not in accordance with the views of the hon. member for Whitehaven. These people could not be expected to be great proficients in the science of political economy; but experience—painful experience—induced them to assent to what he believed to be an acknowledged principle of that science,—namely, that the rise in prices which was caused by a depreciation of money operated with greater rapidity on commodities than on labour. Thus they, the labouring classes, always suffered by a transition from low to high prices. If any hon. Gentleman would take the trouble to refer to the newspapers, the pamphlets, and the ballads—those indicators of popular sentiment—in circulation during the period of the war and the Bank Restriction Act, he would find them to abound with complaints on this head. They whose occupation it was to dilate upon the grievances of the people in that day, ascribed their sufferings to a redundancy of paper money, just as they who pursued a similar occupation in the present day attributed their sufferings to a deficiency of that article. Surely the present currency was fully adequate to the legitimate wants of the country. Assuming that a considerable diminution had taken place, as compared with the amount in circulation during the period of the war and the Bank Restriction Act, he should contend that the remission of annual taxation to an extent exceeding 20,000,000*l.* since that time, made a good set-off. But the fact was, that the amount of circulation at the present time exceeded that of any time during the period to which he had referred. The aggregate amount of Bank of England paper, country bank paper, gold, and silver, now in circulation, was certainly greater than the aggregate amount of Bank of England paper, country bank paper, and silver, in circulation during the latter years of the Restriction Act, when it would be recollected there was no gold in circulation. His own experience, too, as a country banker of thirty years' standing, enabled him to say that he never recollected the time when what was technically termed banking accommodation—the assistance rendered by bankers to those with whom they dealt—was afforded with more facility than at present. They who had available security to offer, could instantly obtain loans to the value of that security; and they who had not such security to offer, but who had, what he had often found to be the best security—good character and good conduct, were assisted to the utmost extent that was compatible with safety to the lender, and with benefit to the borrower. None of those undertakings which were submitted to public enterprise such as rail roads, and works of that description were allowed to languish for want of money. On the contrary, be the amount required ever so enormous, if the scheme presented any degree of plausibility, subscriptions flowed in with an alacrity which indicated anything but a scarcity of the circulating medium. The hon. member for Whitehaven had referred to the state of pauperism in this country, which he seemed to think had been decreasing during the period of the Restriction Act, and to have increased since. Now all the Returns presented to the House connected with this subject, appeared to him to give a different result; but the hon. Member would most likely controvert this point, by mixing up with it the altered value of money. He was, therefore, glad that he had it in his power to produce a document not susceptible of this objection, inasmuch as it gave the number of paupers relieved, and not the money expended for their relief. It did not apply to the kingdom generally, but to one particular town, and that the town, of all others, which he had most pleasure in citing in this debate, the town of Birmingham, near which he resided, but of the actual condition of which he would not speak, because it was not safe to do so. He hoped, however, that he might quote a document without incurring the risk of a broken head, or a devastated house. This document embraced three decennial periods; the first from 1801 to 1810, wherein the average population was 64,848 and the average of paupers 10,117, or fifteen per cent; the second 1811 to 1820, wherein the average of population was 76,689; and that of paupers 13,800, or eighteen per cent; and the third from 1821 to 1830, (which it would be borne in mind, was immediately after the passing of the Act of 1819, wherein the average of population was 95,868, and that of paupers 12,606, being 13½ per cent; a decrease of nearly five per cent as compared with the preceding decennial period. He would add that every money transaction—every bargain and sale—every loan—every contract entered into during the existence of the Bank restriction, was with the full knowledge of all parties concerned, that the paper then circulating would be ultimately converted into gold; for this they had the solemn assurances of repeated Acts of Parliament, which assurances were made good. That fact took away the pretext, miserable as it was, urged by those who advocated what he considered an act of barefaced injustice; that a previous act of injustice had been committed. He denied that, and maintained that the Government of this country had hitherto always observed strict faith in its engagements. What should they gain by acceding to the plans of the hon. member for Whitehaven? A short-lived semblance of prosperity—a parenthesis of bubble speculation—to be succeeded by misery infinitely greater than the distress which preceded it. That was, however, assuming that the inevitable consequences would not immediately follow. The probability was, that they would. The mere discussion of this question had already nipped the opening bud of commercial improvement; and if they prolonged the discussion—especially if they gave any indications of an intention to alter the present monetary system—he was persuaded that evils would thicken around them. "We are sowing the wind, and assuredly we shall reap the whirlwind." His solemn conviction was, that the slightest concession to the plan of the hon. member for Whitehaven would be the first step in the road to ruin—the preliminary to national bankruptcy—to a disastrous revolution in property; to characterize it in one sentence, its impolicy was only equalled by its injustice. During the canvass of a numerous constituency, he was asked by one voter, and one only, to give a pledge relating to this question. The elector said, "Will you vote for measures tending to give the country an adequate currency? To a proposition so fair and reasonable he could but assent. In conformity to that promise if the hon. member for Whitehaven, or any other hon. Member would bring forward a motion to inquire into the adequacy or inadequacy of the present currency, he would support it. The gentleman to whom he had alluded was a respectable ironmaster; a trade at that time suffering under great depression, but which, he was happy to learn, by a letter which he had just received from this identical person, has now experienced a great revival.

Mr. *Poulett Thomson* could assure the House, that it was with great pleasure he had given way to the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Forster), whose speech could not have failed to produce a great effect upon the House, coming, as it did, from one practically engaged in the banking and commercial affairs of this country. He was not surprised that the hon. member for Knaresborough should complain of the manner in which the Motion of the hon. member for Whitehaven had been met; for he seemed, by some happy turn of mind, to imagine, that he could engraft on a Motion, introduced distinctly and avowedly for one purpose, another purpose completely and entirely different; and that he would have an opportunity, by voting for the Committee of the hon. Gentleman, of making that Committee subservient to promote his own plan. After the Amendment of his noble friend, it was impossible that the House could consider that any other question was before it than whether it should affirm or negative a departure from the standard of value as established by law. That was the question which was now before the House, and that was the question on which the country was now looking for the decision of the House. The people anticipated that an end would be put to the agitation of the question—an agitation which, even now, was paralysing in some degree, the trade of the country, and which, if allowed to continue, would be likely to be attended with yet more disastrous consequences. The simple question before the House was —shall there be depreciation or no depreciation? The hon. Member, in introducing his Motion, had entered into a long discussion respecting the distress which he alleged existed in the country, and no doubt the hon. Member acted wisely in so doing for the purpose which he had in view, because, by taking that course, he may find support, perhaps, from some few who, differing from him as to the remedy, might wish to go into a Committee with a view of inquiring into the causes of the distress. He was prepared to maintain, that although there might, and unfortunately did, prevail among certain classes a considerable degree of distress, yet the condition of the country at large was very far from what the hon. Member had described it to be. In spite of the hon. Gentleman's sneer at official documents, he should venture to advert to some to which his position in the Government had given him access, and which he thought the House would consider neither delusive nor valueless. Unless the House was willing to take some of the general facts upon which the hon. Member relied in detail—unless it was willing, in some degree, to take the amount of relief to the poor as a criterion of poverty—willing to look to the consumption of the country and the statements of intelligent individuals—he knew not what could be had recourse to as indices of the public welfare. He wished to touch lightly on the subject of the distress; but at the same time he did not consider it consistent with the honest expression of his opinion, if entertaining, as he did, views different from those of the hon. Gentleman, he did not state his opinions respecting that distress, notwithstanding the unpopularity which might attach to the avowal of them. He did not mean to deny that distress always existed, and always must, to a certain extent, in the country; but that was not the position of the hon. member for Whitehaven (Mr. M. Attwood). He had stated that the distress at present was unparalleled —that every branch of industry was going to decay—that the landholders were all but ruined—that the farmers were in a state of bankruptcy — that the merchants were ready to close their concerns—that manufacturing capital yielded in the shape of profits little or nothing. From these positions of the hon. Gentleman he entirely dissented; and he believed the condition of the several interests of the country to be in a very different state from that which the hon. Member had represented them to be in. To show that the statements which had been made to the House were greatly exaggerated, he (Mr. Poulett Thomson) would prove what the condition of the poor had been during the ten years ending in 1821, as compared with the ten years ending in 1831, by reckoning the sums devoted to the relief of the poor during these periods. In the earlier period 68,000,000*l.* had been given for the relief of the poor, being an average of 6,800,000*l.* a-year; while in the ten years ending in 1831, only 62,900,000*l.* were devoted to the same object; being an average of 6,290,000*l.*; consequently, upon the last period of ten years there had been a reduction of nearly 6,000,000*l.* There had been a reduction on the charge in proportion to the population since that time of not less than twenty-six per cent, the charge having been at the rate of 13*s.* per head in 1814, and 9*s.* 9*d.* in 1831. The following Tables (which the right hon. Member) read would show the House the particulars of his statement:—

Sums expended for the Relief of the Poor.

Average of 3 yrs., 1748, 49, & 50 .	£689,971
1786	1,556,803
Average of 3 yrs., 1783, 84, & 85 .	2,004,237
1803	4,267,963
1812-13 . . .	6,981,212
1813-14 . .	6,627,550
1814-15 . . .	5,743,509
1815-16 . .	5,724,506
1816-17 . . .	6,918,217
1817-18 . .	7,890,148
1818-19 . . .	7,531,650
1819-20 . .	7,329,594
1820-21 . . .	6,958,445
1821-22 . .	6,358,703
In 10 years to 25th March 1822	68,063,534
1822-23 . . .	5,772,958
1823-24 . .	5,734,216
1824-25 . . .	5,786,991
1825-26 . .	5,928,502
1826-27 . . .	6,441,088
1827-28 . .	6,298,003

1828-29 . . .	6,332,410
1829-30 . . .	6,829,042
1830-31 . . .	6,798,888
1831-32 . . .	7,036,968
In 10 years, to 25th March, 1832	62,959,066

Years.	Population of the United Kingdom.	Amount raised in Taxes.	Expended for the relief of Poor.	Proportion of Taxes to population of United Kingdom.	Proportion of Poor Rate to Population of England and Wales.
		£.	£.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
1801	16,338,102	34,115,146	4,017,871	2 1 9	0 9 1
1811	18,547,720	65,173,545	6,656,106	3 10 3	0 13 1
1821	21,193,458	55,834,192	6,358,703	2 12 8	0 10 7
1831	24,271,763	46,424,440	6,798,888	1 18 3	0 9 9

In order, however, to show the real state of the case still more clearly, he had endeavoured to obtain information from some of the principal towns, and he had selected four manufacturing places of great consequence, (Glasgow, Manchester, Sheffield, and Birmingham). He considered that these four towns afforded a fair sample of the town population of Great Britain; and if there were any material distress in the country, it could not fail to pervade those industrious communities. He would begin with Glasgow, and first call the attention of the House to a statement as to the poor. The right hon. Member read the following paper:—

Glasgow.—Poor Rates.—The assessment for the maintenance of paupers in the ten parishes of the Royalty, exclusive of the suburbs, was—

In 1790 - - -	£1,420
1800 - - - -	4,534
1810 - - - -	5,770
1820 - - - -	13,136
1830 - - - -	7,866

'In the town and suburbs the population in 1830 was 202,426; the number of paupers 5,006; and the total sum expended on their relief, 17,281*l.*'

The House must remember that the population of Glasgow was nearly double in 1831, to the population of 1820; so that, with double the population, there was a diminution of the Poor-rate by nearly one-half. He would next read to them an extract of a letter from the Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce at Glasgow, a man on whose authority the House might place the utmost reliance:—

'I have reason to believe that during the year which has just expired, the hand-weaving branch has been enjoying a profitable trade, and the prospects for the coming year are so favourable, that the more prudent manufacturers entertain fears that a little further prosperity may occasion a revival of the spirit of over-trading. The calico-printing business is understood to have been extremely prosperous from the moment of the repeal of the tax on that article, and its prosperity still continues. The silk manufacture, too, is considered to have been doing well. The hands generally belonging to the different branches of industry are in full employment, and, with the exception of the hand-loom weavers, at good wages.'

He would next go to Sheffield, the particulars of which were equally striking, as appeared by the following statement:—

'Population of the township of Sheffield—1811, 31,314; 1821, 35,840; 1831, 59,011.

'Poor-rates of the township of Sheffield—1818, 31,189*l.*; 1820, 37,467*l.*; 1822, 20,141*l.*; 1824, 16,787*l.*; 1826, 12,967*l.*; 1828, 15,926*l.*; 1830, 18,691*l.*; 1832, 17,342*l.*'

Thus there appeared to be a diminution of the Poor-rate by one-half since 1820, during these ten years, which had been spoken of as years of misery and distress, in a town with a population increased from 35,000 to 60,000. In a letter dated 9th April, 1833, the Master Cutler stated that "the wages paid now in this town are not lower than they were in 1798, and provisions are nearly as cheap now as then." Many improvements, however, had, in the meantime, taken place in the economy and application of labour, so that the workmen's wages, although nominally the same, are really higher. The Master Cutler added, "they (the workmen) are certainly more comfortably situated than they have been at any time during the last thirty years." He next came to the town which he had the honour to represent (Manchester), with respect to which he unfortunately could not bring forward such accurate statements as in the other cases. He knew, that if he looked only to the increase of his popularity, the argument which he now brought forward with regard to the distress complained of was not the right way to attain that object. He never meant to deny, that distress among every class did exist then; he only contended against the exaggerations which prevailed upon the subject; and he would do so in the face of his constituents as well as of that House, because he thought it far better that the truth, and the truth alone, should be stated, than that any object, however apparently good, should be sought through the means of statements that required only to be touched, to fall to pieces. How could it be possible, according to the statement of the hon. member for Whitehaven, that four-fifths of the working population of that town were in the parish books when the Poor-rate was only four shillings in the pound. He had not the slightest hesitation in giving a direct contradiction to the statement of the hon. member for Whitehaven, and that contradiction was confirmed by the following facts respecting the great county of Lancashire, which included not only Manchester, but Liverpool, and many other large towns. The aggregate Poor-rate in Lancashire was, in 1813, 336,000*l.*; 1818, 372,000*l.*; 1831, 290,000*l.* Thus there was a diminution of thirty per cent in the Poor-rate, although the population had increased by 300,000 souls. Besides, in the above statement, by taking only every fifth year, he had passed over some of the dearest years, when the rate was higher, and had they been included that improvement would have been still more remarkable. He held in his hand a communication from Manchester, that since 1813 there had been a progressive and very material improvement in the condition of the people: that, in consequence of the new inventions and increased speed of machinery, one-fourth fewer hands were required to produce a given quantity of yarn than twenty years ago (and the reduction had been chiefly in the labour of children); the people were better fed and clothed, and their employment was never more regular and constant. He would then proceed to the town last upon his list, which had been referred to on a former occasion by the hon. Member opposite, who represented it; and which he had represented in such an extraordinary state of distress, that had he not before his eyes the evidence of the parliamentary writ by which the hon. Member was returned, he should almost doubt whether the hon. Gentleman had ever set his foot within the place. He had been forestalled in his intended statements of the decrease of pauperism in Birmingham by the hon. member for Walsall (Mr. Forster), and the House could not have failed to observe how completely his statement negatived the exaggerated accounts of the distress of Birmingham. The fact, that the number of paupers had decreased as compared with the population, from eighteen per cent in 1811, and twenty-four per cent in 1817, to sixteen per cent in 1832, is one of great importance. The hon. Member might doubt his statement, and he would therefore read the particulars of the progress of Pauperism in Birmingham obtained from the authorities of the town.

	Population.	Average No. of Paupers.	
1801 to 1810 -	64,848 -	10,117 -	15 per cent.
1811 to 1820 -	76,689 -	13,800 -	18
1821 to 1830 -	95,868 -	12,606 -	13½
1830 to 1833 -	110,364 -	16,612 -	15
In 1817 -	78,870 -	19,278 -	24
1832 -	113,106 -	18,516 -	16

But he would go further, and produce to the House indubitable evidence of the increased prosperity of the town. The hon. member for Birmingham said in his evidence before a Committee, that capital was extinct in Birmingham, and that although numbers of the people were enjoying luxuries and spending money in amusements, they were growing poor. He should be glad to arrive at the conclusion, that, in spite of growing poorer, men were able to enjoy more of the pleasures of life; but not being able to do so, he was fain to believe that they enjoyed more of the pleasures of life, because they were better able to afford them. One of the best proofs of the prosperity of Birmingham was afforded by the two great canals; and he would read to the House an account of the revenues derived from them during several years:—

	Tolls on the Old Birmingham Canal.	Tolls on the Worcester and Birmingham Canal.
1826 - -	£88,394 - -	£20,255
1827 - -	96,332 - -	24,912
1828 - -	101,932 - -	27,895
1829 - -	102,485 - -	28,052
1830 - -	106,125 - -	31,291
1831 - -	107,033 - -	33,246
1832 - -	105,855 - -	33,700

That was tolerably good evidence, that

trade was not on the decline in Birmingham, that the town was not going to decay, and that capital was not annihilated as was represented by the hon. Member for that town. The Tolls on the Market formed another criterion of the state of the town which would be found to be equally satisfactory. They amounted in 1826-27, to 1,025*l.*; 1827-28, 1,078*l.*; 1828-29, 2,383*l.*; 1829-30, 2,925*l.*; 1830-31, 3,077*l.*; 1831-32, 3,396*l.* Provisions had also fallen in price since 1826:—At the rate of—Meat 23, Bread 7½, Bacon 31, Cheese 40—per cent.

He would not pretend to say, that his informants were more correct than the hon. Member, but they had the advantage of stating figures, and they had access to all the documents of the town. It was for the House to judge whether the vague statements of the hon. Gentleman, or the documents furnished by the Magistrates, were most deserving confidence. He had another document to which he would call their attention, and leave them to judge of its value. It was an extract of a letter from the senior Magistrate of Birmingham, dated March, 1833, and that Gentleman had the reputation of being every way qualified to give a correct opinion on the subject. He wrote—‘ From ‘ an experience of more than fifty years, ‘ I can safely aver, that I never saw the ‘ artizans better fed, clothed, or more comfortably housed. As respects the town ‘ itself, there are manifest symptoms of ‘ improvement. From adequate authority, ‘ I may say, that the property of the place, ‘ and within four miles of it, has increased ‘ on an average rate of twenty-five per cent ‘ within the last fifteen years. More building is now going on than has been known ‘ for many years. The increase of parochial expenditure is trifling compared ‘ with the greatly augmented population. ‘ Contrary to all former precedents, nearly ‘ all transactions in business are on money ‘ terms. The Birmingham canal—that ‘ great dock for the conveyance of our raw ‘ materials, and heavy articles—has a larger ‘ tonnage than ever was known, and all ‘ the institutions are well supported.’ He had thought it right to dwell on these facts, because the hon. Member grounded his Motion on the assertion, that the distress of the country was great and unparalleled. After the facts which he had stated, he did not believe, that the House would adopt the hon. Member's conclusion. He was however prepared to go further, and in spite of the observations of the hon. member for Oldham, who asserted, that an increase of consumption was only an evidence of increase of distress, he would refer to the increase of consumption in the United Kingdom of the four great articles, all entering largely into the consumption of the poorer classes—tobacco, sugar, tea, and coffee—as evidence of the not decaying prosperity of the kingdom.—For this purpose the right hon. Member proceeded to mention the particulars in the following Table of the

CONSUMPTION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

	1814.	1832.	INCREASE.
Tobacco ...	15,373,221 lbs.	20,235,468	31 per cent
Sugar	1,997,909 cwt.	3,655,535	83 —
Tea	19,224,154 lbs.	31,548,407	65 —
Coffee	6,324,267 lbs.	22,952,527	263 —

Increase of Population estimated at 24 per cent.

He went back, it would be observed, to the year 1814, because that year had been selected by the hon. member for Whitehaven as the halcyon period of unlimited paper issues, and unbounded prosperity. Let the hon. Member for Oldham say what he pleased, he was sure the House, after hearing such a statement would be convinced that the mass of the people enjoyed a greater command over the comforts of life than formerly. The rich man, it would be remembered, added little or nothing to his consumption of the necessaries of life, however much the price might fall, and therefore he was justified in assuming, that the increased consumption he had pointed out had taken place exclusively among the lower and middle classes, and was a sure proof that they had increased in comfort and opulence. He would next refer to the consumption of cotton and sheep's wool, constituting the great staple manufactures of the country. He had separated these from the other articles, because a large portion of them were exported; but the increase, as a large part was consumed at home, might be taken both as a proof of additional enjoyment and additional employment for the labouring classes. The consumption of these articles, then, was:—

	1820.	1832.	INCREASE.
Cotton Wool...	152,829,633	259,412,463	70 per cent
Sheep's Wool ...	9,775,605	27,666,350	183 —

Increase of Population in the same period 16 per cent.

Perhaps he had better not speak of silk, as there had been several alterations in the duty. Another point which he considered deserving of notice was the great diminution of the rate of mortality which had taken place in the country during the last fifty years, as it showed an increase of comfort. In 1780, one in forty died annually; at present the proportion was not more than one in fifty-four—being a diminution of thirty-six per cent. Was not that also an evidence that the condition of the people had improved? In adducing these returns he was replying to that part of the hon. Gentleman's speech in which he stated that the power of consumption of the people had only increased eleven per cent, while the population had increased thirty per cent. The documents he had quoted showed the case to be very different. He regretted as much as any man that there should be distress in the country, and the rather as he feared it was a condition of affairs for which patience was the only remedy; at the same time he should be the first to advocate the principle that it was the bounden duty of Parliament to seek a remedy for distress, and, whenever inquiry appeared likely to point out a remedy, it ought to be instituted. To any inquiry which seemed to hold out a promise of utility he would readily assent; but the present proposition he considered would prove disastrous in its consequences. He was not deaf to the cry of distress—he wished to diminish and relieve it to the utmost extent possible, but he looked upon the proposition to be made solely with a view to depreciate the currency. He should be able to show, that by granting the Committee asked for by the hon. Member, and granting the depreciation which might be the consequence of it, this House would inflict upon the mass of the community (the labouring classes especially) an amount of misery and wretchedness such as never was before inflicted upon any country. All history demonstrated, however beneficial a depreciation of the currency might be to the debtor, who wished to acquit himself of his obligations at a reduced standard of value—however beneficial for a time to the tradesman who held a stock of goods; it must be, as it ever had been, the most severe infliction possible for the labouring classes. He wished that this question should be well understood by the country, not but that he agreed with the hon. Gentleman behind him (Mr. Forster), that there was far from being that feeling upon the subject amongst the industrious classes which had been described by the hon. Member. He had continued intercourse with people of various classes, and from his experience he must say, that although among certain currency doctors there might be a cry with respect to this question, and there might have been attempts made to enlist the people on their side, yet those attempts had all failed, and the people were indifferent, if not averse, to the change contemplated by the hon. Member. To show the effects of a depreciation of the currency, he would go back, very shortly, to rather an early period in the history of this country, that in which the first considerable depreciation took place in the value of gold and silver, in consequence of the opening of the South American mines. Between 1527, and about 1540, the pound sterling was depreciated nearly one-third. All the writers of the time describe the miserable condition to which the poor of England were reduced. Before the passing of the 43rd of Elizabeth, they were represented as wandering about begging or committing the most wanton crimes in open day. It had been disputed, whether the distress thus described was not owing to the abolition of the monasteries in the reign of Henry 8th; but when a similar state of distress existed in other states of Europe where no monasteries were abolished, and no Poor-laws established, it was right to infer that those writers who attributed the distress to the depreciation in the value of money formed a correct opinion. He would quote only one sentence to the House upon this subject, from the writings of Mr. John Smith who, in speaking of the distress of 1550, said—'The principal 'real grievance at this time of the poorer 'manufacturers, they do not appear to 'have been sensible of, and historians 'have since overlooked it, was the state of 'the coin. The debasement of the coin, 'which was now of several years standing, 'had undoubtedly given a nominal advance to all things vendible; and though 'perhaps to wages too, yet probably 'nothing near in proportion to the difference of the coin. And as the money in 'which they were paid, not containing as 'much silver as it did before, would not 'purchase the same quantity of necessaries of life as it was wont to do—that, in 'course, must have bore hard upon the 'lower sort of people especially, who had 'everything to buy, and nothing to sell, 'except their labour.' Were Mr. Smith writing with all the experience of the present day, he could not more accurately describe the effects of depreciation which had taken place in our times; or what would be the effects of the depreciation now proposed by the hon. Member. In 1550, in consequence of this depreciation in the value of money, and the miserable condition of the people, a maximum price was actually placed on all the commodities sold in this country, which many writers ascribe to the proper cause. The second period to which he begged to call the attention of the House, was that from 1660 to 1760, during which, with one exception—the value of money remained nearly equal; and there had been no period, with that one exception, of greater prosperity to the labouring classes. He would state the evidence upon which he came to that conclusion. In the year 1680, the Poor-rates were computed by Davenant at 665,000*l.* for England and Wales; in 1750, nearly a hundred years afterwards, they amounted only to 689,000*l.*, having increased only 34,000*l.* in the long period of a century, during which the precious metals retained nearly the same value. There was, however, one exception; that was about the year 1695, when the coin of the country was debased. If Gentlemen would turn to the history of that day, they would see to what a state of misery and distress the labouring classes were reduced. Mr. Lowndes said, in his Report to the Treasury, in 1695, that the degraded state of the coinage was "one great cause of the raising the price, not only of all merchandises, but of every article necessary for the maintenance of the common people, to their great grievance." Mr. Locke, in his answer to Mr. Lowndes, confirmed this statement, and said, that "the money-price of all sorts of provisions had risen excessively." Let the House see the effect of this upon the Poor-rates. In the year 1700 they had risen, according to Sir F. Morton Eden's calculation, to 1,000,000*l.* Afterwards, when the currency had been restored, and had again become settled, they fell in 1750, to 680,000*l.* That proved, he thought, that the only interruption to prosperity which occurred in the course of a century, originated in the debasement of the coinage and lasted till wages had righted themselves by being raised in proportion. The third period to which he wished to draw the attention of the House, that from 1770 to 1816, was one of considerable depreciation. The evidence for this period was much less easily disputed than that to which he had hitherto adverted. Mr. Arthur Young took great pains upon the subject, and spent three years as Secretary of the Agricultural Society, in carrying on an inquiry into the state of the poor, the amount of their wages and the prices of their provisions; and he stated that the mean price of agricultural labour in England and Wales, during the three years ending 1770, was about 7*s.* 6*d.* per week, or 1*s.* 3*d.* per day; that the mean price of agricultural labour in 1810 and 1811, when the depreciation was at its acmé, was 14*s.* 6*d.* per week, or 2*s.* 5*d.* per day, being a rise of nearly 100 per cent on the former period; but in the mean time beef had risen from about 1*l.* 7*s.* to 3*l.* 10*s.* per cwt., or nearly 300 per cent.; bread had more than doubled; butter had risen from 6½*d.* to 1*s.* 2½*d.* per lb., being a rise of about 120 per cent.; cheese had risen from 3½*d.* to 8½*d.*, being more than 200 per cent; oatmeal had risen from 4*s.* 9*d.* to 11*s.* 6*d.*; salt had risen 400 per cent; malt 140 per cent; and other articles in proportion." It appeared, therefore, that whilst wages rose only 100 per cent, some of the most essential articles of provision rose 120, 200, and even 400 per cent. Hence, said Mr. Young, the extreme distress of the labouring classes—a distress which, at the end of the war, was evinced by the great increase of the Poor-rates, to which he was always willing to refer as a test. In 1783, 1784, and 1785, the Poor-rates, according to the Returns, averaged 2,400,000*l.*; and, in 1815, they amounted to 5,724,000*l.*, being an increase of more than 150 per cent. In the fourth period during which the standard of value had been raised in the manner so much objected to by the hon. member for Whitehaven, he found the greatest difficulty in dealing with the subject, and in bringing undoubted facts to bear upon it; but there were documents which would, he thought, be sufficient to decide the point. The tables kept at Greenwich-hospital, containing the prices of provisions, and the wages of labour, and the extremely able statistical tables kept at Glasgow, by Dr. Cleland, whose accuracy and research it was impossible to praise too highly, would throw light on the subject. What were the real wages of artisans in 1814, 1815, and 1816, so much lauded by the hon. Gentlemen; and what were they at present? Whilst the prices of commodities had fallen very materially, owing to the rise in the value of the currency, the wages of labour had not fallen in the same proportion. From Dr. Cleland's tables he would quote this statement:—

		Mechanics		Weavers	
		s. d.	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*
Rate of Wages	1819	2 6	to 3 9	0 8¾	to 1 2½
	1831	do.	do.	0 11	to 1 4

Thus the rise in weavers' wages, since 1819, had been fifteen to twenty per cent, and that of mechanics stationary. The prices of provisions during the same periods stood thus:—

	Oatmeal	Bread per qr loaf	Cheese	Candles	Soft Sugar
	s. d.	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*d. d.*
1819	1 5	0 11¾	0 8½	1 0	0 7
1831	1 2	0 8½	0 6	0 7	0 5½
Fall since 1819:—	7 per cent.	25 p. cent.	29 p. cent.	41 p. cent.	21 p. cent.

The Greenwich-hospital tables, to which he appealed with confidence, because they were official, and regularly kept, showed the same results. He had taken three periods from these tables, and had placed against them the amount of wages paid to bricklayers, and the price of meat and flour. The account stood thus:—

	Wages of Bricklayers.	Flesh per cwt.	Flour.
	s. d.	*s. d.*	*s. d.*
1790	2 4	36 10	43 4
1812	5 5	78 0	107 5
1830	4 10	43 6	46 0

It thus appeared, that between 1790 and 1812, there was a rise in wages of 132 per cent.; and upon flesh and flour, of 110 and 150 per cent. Between 1812 and 1830 there had been a fall of only ten per cent in wages; whilst the fall in rent had been at least fifteen per cent; in the price of flesh and flower, seventy-seven per cent and 133 per cent; and everything else in proportion. These facts deserved the consideration of those who were to pass judgment upon the question before the House, because they showed indisputably that depreciation, however brought about, must be injurious to the operative classes. Wages never rose in proportion, or, at least, only after a very long period, to the rise in the value of commodities; and it was impossible to impress too strongly upon the attention of the House or of the country this fact—that the labouring classes would not profit by any attempt to depreciate the currency. What had been characterized by the hon. member for Whitehaven as a "system of confiscation and public robbery," had certainly not been one of confiscation to them. He did not indeed admit the justice of those words, as applied to the Act of 1819; but if the hon. Member thought proper so to apply them, he must admit them as applicable to what must be the result of his proposition, with this difference, that if the system of confiscation and public robbery now proposed were adopted, it would tend most materially to injure the operative classes; so that, whilst they participated in the shame of the Act, they would not only be excluded from any of its supposed benefits, but reap from it inevitable misery. If the hon. Member's proposition would not benefit the labouring classes, whom would it benefit? The hon. Member said, that the country prospered under the former system, but he only showed that a fictitious paper money for a time increased the industry of the country. He failed entirely in showing any connexion between the simple fact of returning to the metallic standard, and the distress of the present time. No over-issue of paper could take place, with whatever apparent prosperity it might be attended, without there necessarily being a reaction productive of misery; and in proportion as over-issues took place—in proportion as the stream had been unduly supplied—would the returning rush of the waters be great, and barrenness and dearth be spread over the land. He had heard it said, "We do not wish to produce depreciation by any violent or sudden measure; we mean to obtain an over-issue of paper, which will create great temporary prosperity, to be followed by contraction of the currency, by distress, by applications for gold, by the inability of the Bank to meet those applications; and thus arrive at an inconvertible paper currency, which, once again obtained, you will never more return to cash payments." That was a doctrine which he had heard propounded, although he did not believe its advocates would be found openly to avow themselves in that House. But, in case they should, he rejoiced that this Motion had been submitted to the House—he rejoiced that this question of a straight forward, downright act of spoliation and bankruptcy had been offered for their decision, because it would, he trusted, entirely prevent any attempt at arriving at the same result by a sidewind which would lengthen present suffering, and increase the ultimate distress. But who did the hon. Gentleman think would benefit by the depreciation? He had shown that it could not benefit the labouring class. The hon. Gentleman said, that the landed interest was suffering. He admitted it; but would the landed interest be relieved by a measure of this kind, except in so far as it would be relieved in a manner which he respected the gentlemen of England too much to suppose they would accept—namely, by paying off their fixed engagements in a depreciated currency. Would their rents be better paid in that currency than in any other? But supposing their rents were raised, and that all other things were raised in proportion, could they purchase more of the enjoyments of life than they could command at present? They could receive relief in no way but that which he believed every man of honour would spurn. Then as to the manufacturers and shopkeepers, how would it benefit them? It would benefit them to the extent of their stock on hand, and no more. That might be to the extent of five, or ten, or twenty per cent, or whatever might be the amount of the depreciation. That would be the work of a single day. When the next day they came to purchase, they would find that their condition would not be improved. Then was there any other party who could derive a benefit from it but the debtor, and why should the debtor be more an object of sympathy than the creditor? Putting aside all considerations of honesty, he saw no claim the debtor had to the consideration of the State. The creditor it was, generally, who had amassed capital, and who had contributed to the increase of the national wealth, while the debtor might have contracted engagements he could not fulfil, and might have dissipated gains he had not honestly acquired. For his own part, he asked for equal justice for each party, for both debtor and creditor; but looking to the general policy of such a measure as that before the House, he would ask what, if it were carried into effect, would become of the desire of accumulating; and who would wish to have property, when the simple *fiat* of the Legislature might destroy, in a few hours, the result of fifty years' persevering toil, and the hopes of parents and children? And the only reason for such a step was, that the poor debtor was distressed, whilst your rich creditor was enjoying all the sweets of opulence. There was much capital in the country, which must always remain in it, and which could not be applied except where it stood; but there was much also that might be transferred: let the experiment now proposed be once tried, and away would go a large mass of the capital which had tended so much to invigorate the industry and add to the resources of the country. This was, in his opinion, the fair long-sighted view of the question. The question was one of depreciation or no depreciation. The Committee which the hon. Member called for once granted, that must follow (he would not say that it must necessarily follow as the result of that Committee's acts), but in the minds of the public it must follow, and the effect must be worse, from the fact of the hon. Member leaving the extent of the depreciation undefined. If he had said that it would be five, or ten, or fifteen per cent, men would be prepared for the result; but leaving it indefinite, he left them nothing to guide them. Every creditor in London would know it to-morrow, and what would be the consequence? An hon. Member had stated some time ago, that such was the distress of the country, that every second or third house from Charing-cross to the Exchange contained an insolvent. Suppose that to be the fact, what would the creditors say when they found a proposition of this sort entertained and agreed to by the House? The creditor would go to his debtor and say, "Pay me at once, or I shall sell all you possess; and, though it may be at a sacrifice, that must be better than the indefinite loss which I may sustain by waiting to obtain payment in a depreciated currency. I shall realize what I can, and transfer it to a country where the principle of depreciation may not be so much in fashion." What would be the situation of the banks if this Committee were appointed? Was there a man who had a bank-note, who would not at once endeavour to turn it into cash, that he might, as much as possible, guard against the impending depreciation? The pens would be scarcely dry by the means of which the proceedings of that House were circulated throughout the country, before, provided the hon. Member's proposal was adopted, there would ensue a scene of universal bankruptcy and confusion never witnessed in any country. And for whose benefit was this to happen?

Not for the benefit of landed proprietors; not for that of manufacturers and merchants, since their benefit would be only for a day; not for the good of the labouring and operative classes, since they would be deeply injured by it; not for the benefit of the fundholders, since they would be actually pillaged by it! For whose benefit was it then? Solely for that of debtors. By it Mr. A, the debtor, would have so much the more, and Mr. B, the creditor, so much the less. On one hint that had been thrown out in the course of the evening, he would say a single word. It had been said, that, by this depreciation, the public burthens would be diminished; he admitted the assertion, but, at the same time, he would say that there were other ways, and happily honest and honourable ways, to diminish those burthens, without disturbing public contracts. Would not a reduction of taxation be a more direct and a more honest mode of relieving those burthens? and had nothing been recently done in that way? Upwards of 6,000,000*l.* had been reduced within the last four years, and relief had thus been afforded to the people in a more upright and equitable manner than in the way suggested by the present Motion, because the public creditor had not been deprived of that to which he was fairly entitled. The hon. member for Birmingham, indeed, contended that reduction of taxation gave no relief, which was a remarkable doctrine to be entertained by gentlemen who proposed to depreciate the currency as a means of lightening the public burthens. The hon. Gentleman, the member for Oldham, had given utterance to the oft-repeated fallacy that the creditor had gained enormously by the appreciation of money. He very much doubted the correctness of this assertion. Mr. Mushet had shown, as clearly as could be done by figures, that the public creditor, instead of gaining by the appreciation of money, was, taking into consideration the loss he suffered during the depreciation, a loser to the extent of somewhere about 44,000*l.* a year. He objected to the propositions of the hon. Member because he saw in them the complete derangement of the whole commercial and even social system of the country. He believed that nothing but ruin and bankruptcy could follow their adoption, and the loss of that high name for honour and integrity which the country at present possessed among the nations of Europe. If they could no longer bear the public burthens, or pay that which was due to the public creditor, he should say, "compound with him; exhibit the state of your affairs; say that you are not able to pay the 28,000,000*l.* which he at present receives; but do not adopt that which was only a clumsy means of arriving at the same end,—which carried with it a complete disruption of all money contracts, and rendered insecure private and public credit,—which would reduce to beggary not only a few rich fundholders, as they were termed, but no less than 275,000 public creditors, who received dividends under 400*l.*, and which would take the means of livelihood from the widow and the orphan." Let them avoid doing an act of that kind, not only because it would inflict on the country all the misery he had pointed out, but because in his conscience he believed it would cause them to forfeit that which ought to be as dear to a nation as to an individual—a good name for honour and integrity.

Debate Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, April 23, 1833.

MINUTES.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of the Earl of ROSSLYN, an Account of the Quantities of different kinds of Grain Exported from Ireland to Great Britain, and Imported to Ireland from Great Britain, in each year from 1820, to 1830: and the Quantity of all kinds of Grain Imported to Great Britain from British North America, in each year from 1823, to 1832.

Petitions presented. By the Bishops of HEREFORD and LONDON, by the Earl of WICKLOW, and by Lords WESTERN, POLTIMORE, ELLENBOROUGH, and SUFFIELD,—from a great Number of Places,—against Slavery.—By the Earl of RADNOR, and by Lord WESTERN, from Oxford, and other Places,—against the Assessed Taxes.—By the Bishops of LONDON, DURHAM, and CHESTER, by the Marquess of CHOLMONDELEY, and by Lord FEVERSHAM, from a Number of Places,—for the Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By the Bishop of CHESTER, from Taplow, against the Sale of Beer Act.—By Viscount MELBOURNE, from Llandrinio, against Tithes.—By the Earl of FALMOUTH, from Truro, for making that Place the Assize Town instead of Launceston.—By the Bishop of LONDON, from twenty-one Places in Essex, against the Sale of Beer Act.

METROPOLITAN SLAUGHTER-HOUSES.] The Bishop of *Llandaff* presented a petition from the Members of the Association for promoting Rational Humanity towards the Animal Creation, complaining of the position of the great Metropolitan Cattle Market, and praying for the establishment of four Live Cattle Markets, with contiguous *Abattoirs*, in the outskirts of the City. The petitioners stated, that Smithfield market was utterly inadequate to the reception of the number of cattle necessary for the consumption of London, and that being situated in the heart of the Metropolis, it was necessary to drive cattle through crowded thoroughfares, in many instances through many miles of the most frequented streets, causing suffering to the animals and danger to the passengers. The right reverend Prelate said, that a stranger would hardly believe that the only live cattle market in London was situated in the very centre of the city, surrounded by narrow streets, through miles of which the cattle had to be driven. The object of the Society in petitioning their Lordships, was in hopes of drawing public attention to the nuisance, in hopes that some means might be taken to get rid of it; and they suggested, what appeared to him to be a very feasible plan of doing so, by establishing more commodious cattle markets in the outskirts of the Metropolis, to be placed under the superintendence of the public authorities. At the time the Smithfield market was formed, it was the outskirts of the city, and the neighbourhood was by no means populous. It could not, therefore, be taken as an argument against the proposed plan, that our ancestors had, in their wisdom, considered the heart of the town the proper situation for a market. He considered, too, that it was a matter worthy of consideration, that by this plan they would get rid of the nuisance and danger attending the driving of the cattle through the crowded and narrow streets; and the cattle themselves would be spared the torture which they suffered during their progress through those crowded thoroughfares. The improvement proposed by the petitioners had been found practicable in the capital of France, where the *Abattoirs* were all situated in the more remote parts of the city, and so constructed that the terror and pain inflicted on the animal was brought down to its *minimum.* The only obstacles to the plan were the existing interests of those in the neighbourhood of the present market. He thought the loss would be very small, if any; but even supposing that there might be some loss incurred by the change, he did not suppose that the Corporation of the city of London, which was very wealthy, would demur on account of the loss, where the object to be gained was so important. He hoped that some noble Lord would take up this matter, and bring in a Bill upon the subject. He would willingly do so himself but he felt himself wholly inadequate to the task.

The Bishop of *Bristol* supported the prayer of the petition. He thought it a matter of importance as connected with the health of the metropolis, for the cattle could not be so fit for food when killed after being over-driven and heated in passing through the crowded streets. He hoped that the Government would think the subject worthy of its attention.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, April 23, 1833.

MINUTES.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of Sir THOMAS FREEMANTLE, an Account of the Number of Excise Licenses issued under the Provisions of the Act 1st Will. 4th, cap. 64, for the half year, ending 31st March, 1831, and the following two years.—On the Motion of Mr. HUME, the aggregate Expense, and the Number of Agents, and Bailiffs, and Servants, employed in managing the Estates of Greenwich Hospital in Northumberland, Durham, and Cumberland, in 1832; the Salaries paid to the Judge of the Admiralty Court in the year 1792, and the Augmentation at subsequent periods, with the Amount of Retired Allowances, &c.: also the Number of Causes tried in the Admiralty Court of England, since 1792, and the Number of Days the Court sat for Business; also the Amount of Excise Duties on Stained Paper.—On the Motion of Sir JAMES GRAHAM, the Number of Prisoners tried at each Admiralty Sessions, since 1792.

Bills. Read a second time:—Law Amendment; Bribery at Elections.

Petitions presented. By Captain W. GORDON, from three Places, against the New System of Education in Ireland: and from four Places in Scotland, for an Alteration in the Monetary System.—By the same, and by Mr. WILKS, and Mr. T. A. SMITH, from several Places,—for a Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By Captain W. GORDON, from Turriff, for a Reduction of the Duty on Soap; from the County of Aberdeen, for a Reduction of the Malt Duty; from the Society of Aberdeen, for a Repeal of the Attornies' Tax.—By the same from Huntley; Mr. WILKS, from Wandsworth, and other Places; and by the Marquess of BLANDFORD, from New Woodstock,—against Slavery.—By Mr. JERVIS, from Chester, for establishing a Court of Requests in that City for the Recovery of Small Debts.—By Mr. WILKS, from Spalding and Wetherfields, for a Redress of the Grievances of the Dissenters.

FIRE INSURANCE.] Mr. *Henry Handley* presented a Petition from a parish in the county of Lincoln for a reduction in the duties on Insurance of farming-stock. He felt bitterly disappointed that the noble Chancellor of the Exchequer had not taken into consideration the circumstances of the agricultural interest, and relieved it as well as the mercantile interest of the article of insurance duties. Nothing would tend more to the suppression of incendiarism than an alteration in this point. He had a motion on the subject, but trusted, that before the time fixed for bringing it on, the noble Lord would take the matter into his favourable consideration.

Lord *Althorp* observed, that there would have been a difficulty in reducing the duty on insurances of farming stock separately from that on farming buildings, &c.; and if he had proposed a reduction of all insurance duties, a deficiency would be created of so large an amount as to prevent other more pressing reductions.

Mr. *Cobbett* said, the noble Lord (Lord Althorp) seemed determined to take off no taxes by which the great bulk of the population could be relieved. There were not fewer than 300 Members in that House who came in under a pledge to vote for the repeal of the malt, the hop, the soap duties, and the duty on newspapers. He was quite astonished to find that an hon. Member asserted that the people of England expected nothing more than the Budget proposed by the noble Lord. They expected a great deal more. They expected the total repeal of the Malt-duty. Barley was but 20*s.* a quarter, the duty on it when malted was 20*s.* 8*d.* And the price of a quarter of malt was not less than 60*s.* This did not arise from the expense of malting.

Lord *Althorp:* Barley is more than 20*s.* a quarter.

Mr. *Cobbett:* It was not more in the county of Norfolk last week. The additional twenty shillings in the price of the malt was occasioned by the excise regulations, which subjected the maltsters to much unnecessary expense, inconvenience, and difficulty. The drink of the whole people was produced from this article, and they expected that the duty would be taken off. They would then have their quarter of malt for 20*s.* instead of 60*s.* for barley was convertible into malt without any expense. The people would despise the Reform Bill and the reform, they would be ashamed of their jubilees and their rejoicings on the success of that measure, unless 40*s.* a-quarter were taken off the price of malt. This duty was one cause why young people were driven from the farm-houses, because of the expense of supplying them with beer; and it led also to the abuses arising from beer-shops. A Sussex farmer, in his evidence before the Committee last Session, said that forty-five years back all his labourers brewed their own beer, and drank it with their families; that, however, at present none of them brewed unless those to whom he gave the malt. Country gentlemen ought to attend to the wants of the agricultural class, in place of prosecuting poor fellows for killing their pheasants and hares; and it would be much better if Lord Althorp took off the malt duty, in place of removing the duty from tiles and other articles. The whole amount which Lord Althorp pretended to take off in his Budget would not give one farthing relief to the people at large.

Petition laid on the Table.

EXPLANATION.] Sir Henry Willoughby moved that the Order of the Day be read for resuming the Adjourned Debate.

Lord *Althorp* rose to make an Explanation as to the expression he had made use of last night, that he, as an honest man, could not consent to the Motion. The hon. Gentleman thought that he meant to imply by that, that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Attwood) was a dishonest man. He had no intention to apply the words in that sense, and could not have, for he must have applied them to many of his personal friends who supported the Motion. He should have considered himself acting as a dishonest man if he had not opposed the Motion, whether he referred to the former opinions he had delivered, or to the public situation he held. He was surprised that the hon. Member should for one moment have supposed that he meant to imply anything dishonest on his part in bringing forward his Motion.

Mr. *Attwood* complained that the noble Lord's speech of the night before was totally inapplicable to his Motion, which was for an inquiry into the state of the country, to see how far its evils had been brought about by our monetary system. The noble Lord had, however, spoken of his Motion as if it were a Motion for a Committee to alter the standard of value. The noble Lord might substitute any Amendment he pleased for the Motion; but he had a right to complain that the arguments urged by the noble Lord were not directed against anything he had said. He could scarcely believe, that the noble Lord could so have misinterpreted his speech, but certainly the version given by the noble Lord of his speech was altogether different from that he had the honour to deliver. The noble Lord's arguments were all directed against depreciation, and the noble Lord used these arguments as if he had proposed depreciation. He had made no such proposition. He had urged the House of Commons to inquire into the condition of the country, and what had been the effects of the monetary system as it now stands? His proposition was, to inquire if they did not possess some means of relieving that condition without committing injustice in violating the faith pledged to the public creditor. He did not suppose the noble Lord meant to commit an act of injustice; but he had, by his mode of arguing the question, raised a prejudice against the Motion submitted to the House. The noble Lord had endeavoured to gain votes by alarming timid minds. He wished to inquire if there were no means of relieving the people, as he believed there were, without any breach of faith; and if there were not, then certainly he should propose an inquiry into the propriety of reducing the burthens of the people. His opinions might be wrong, or they might be right; but the question was, that the Reformed Parliament should inquire into the distresses of the people. The noble Lord said in his Resolution, that they should not lower the standard of value. What did the noble Lord mean? Did he mean the old standard, such as it existed down to the period of the Bank Restriction Act? Did he propose that the House should never inquire into this question to ascertain whether that standard were just, and whether they did not commit a great injustice in now adopting it? He would undertake to show, that his Majesty, by issuing the Proclamation prescribed by the Act of 1816, which was a part of the standard, could at once give considerable relief to the industrious classes, and particularly to the agricultural class, by raising the price of agricultural produce. Why should the House and the country be forbidden to inquire into this question? The Motion did not rest upon the footing it was put upon by the noble Lord and the right hon. the Vice-President of the Board of Trade, but entirely and solely upon the circumstance whether the condition of the country did not demand the attention of that House.

Lord *Althorp* complained of the unusual conduct of the hon. Member, who certainly had not trespassed upon the Orders of the House, because the motion for reading the Order of the Day was entirely a new Motion; but he certainly had trespassed upon its usages in making a second speech upon that occasion, while he reserved himself in his reply to refute the opinions of his right hon. friend, the Vice-President of the Board of Trade, and his other opponents. The hon. Member had spoken for three hours last night, and to-night he had spoken again. The hon. Member said he had misrepresented him, and the hon. Member could not suppose that he had heard the hon. Member's arguments, but the hon. Member heard his reply last night, and did not then contradict it. The tendency of all the hon. Member's arguments were what he had stated. The hon. Member asked what was the meaning of his (Lord Althorp's) Resolution? Nothing could be more remote from vague and indefinite than that Resolution. It was, he thought, extremely precise. It said, "that any alteration of the monetary system of the country, which would have the effect of lowering the standard of value, would be highly inexpedient." Could the hon. Member doubt the effect of that? Did it not precisely pledge the House not to lower the standard? It did not preclude the Committee from making silver the standard instead of gold, if that would not have the effect of lowering the standard. The hon. Member, however, went back to the old standard, and if the pound of silver were to be coined as he wished it, the effect would be to lower the standard." The hon. Member said, he wished to alarm persons; the object, however, of his Resolution was, to relieve Gentlemen from their alarm. By the Motion of the hon. Member—he did not say that such was the intention of the hon. Member, but it was the tendency of his Motion—to make Gentlemen who were pledged to vote for inquiring into the distress of the country, also vote for an alteration of the standard. The hon. member for Oldham, for one, had been caught by the mode in which the hon. Gentleman had worded his Motion. To-night the tone and language adopted by the hon. Gentleman were different from those he used last night. In his speech last night, he had applied himself—and this was the beginning and the end of his speech—to show that the distress of the country was caused by the monetary system, and that by an alteration of the monetary system, a rise of prices might be produced, and distress relieved. He asked the hon. Member how he could produce a rise in prices if he did not lower the standard of value? In that sense he had argued the question, and said that the common sense view of the matter was, that the effects described by the hon. Member could only be produced by lowering the standard of value. The hon. Member said his Motion had nothing to do with that, and that the Amendment had been directed wholly to that. He certainly thought, that if the Motion of the hon. Gentleman were carried, and the Committee were appointed under the notion that the standard of the currency was to be lowered, it would have a most disastrous effect, Therefore he had thought it his duty as an honest man, and taking into consideration the situation he filled, to call upon the House to pledge itself before going into a Committee of Inquiry, not to lower the standard of value.

The Order of the Day read.

STATE OF THE COUNTRY—MONETARY SYSTEM—ADJOURNED DEBATE.] Sir *H. Willoughby* was about to address the House on a tedious subject, but he would endeavour to make his observations as brief as possible. Notwithstanding the weight which he attached to the opinions of the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he must say that it was his intention to vote for the inquiry proposed by the hon. member for Whitehaven. He should do so because he thought the state of the country demanded that inquiry, and not because he had any dishonest design with reference to the currency. He, however, should be prepared to enter into a consideration of the monetary system; but he could assure the noble Lord, with as great a horror of spoliation and confiscation as any man could have. It was not his intention to go into much argument or lengthened detail to show the existence or extent of distress in the country; that part of the question lay in a nut-shell. The population at present was 25,000,000; and he found that they were not so well fed or so well clothed; that they did not possess so many of the necessaries as heretofore the people of this country had possessed. That was enough to justify any man in desiring and promoting inquiry into the state of the country. The increasing amount of the Poor-rates, averaging 62,000,000*l.* in the last ten years, was another reason to infer distress enough in the country to warrant an inquiry on the part of the Parliament. A reference to the Report of the Poor Law Commissioners, which he had read through, would incontestably prove, that the labourers and the agricultural population of the country were not in that condition in which they ought to be. He would confine himself to the most important question involved in the present discussion—namely, whether or not any portion of the distress of the country had arisen from the change that had been made in our monetary system. It was a fallacy to suppose, that those who supported the Motion for inquiry upon this occasion were necessarily opposed to the Government. He was most anxious to give his support to the present Government; at the same time he felt it his duty to give his vote for the Motion brought forward by the hon. member for Whitehaven. He, for one, thought that the greatest importance attached to an inquiry of this description, as the result of such an inquiry, if it should be instituted, might be to discover some mode of levying the same amount of revenue without its pressing so heavily as the present one upon the industrious and productive classes of the country. It appeared to him that a great deal of unnecessary apprehension had prevailed as to the danger of such an inquiry into the state of our monetary system. He was, on the contrary, of opinion, that, for many years past, great defects had arisen, and great evils had been occasioned, in consequence of Parliament not having taken into consideration, from time to time, the state of our monetary system. He had only to refer to the various inquiries that had taken place with regard to the Bank, to show that such inquiries were attended with beneficial results. The consequence of the inquiries regarding the Bank had been the production, at length, of a more healthy action upon its part. So far, therefore, from thinking that an inquiry into the state of our monetary system would be fraught with any degree of danger, he was of opinion that many of the evils which now pressed upon the country owed their origin to a want of parliamentary inquiry, from time to time, into the state of that system. The Legislature of this country, in consequence of its conduct, had become unwittingly, but justly, chargeable with every mistake and with every blunder that had been committed with regard to our monetary system. It was true that the system which commenced in 1797, and continued up to 1819, was calculated to defraud creditors, persons of fixed incomes, and people of that description; but the error committed in 1819 defrauded debtors, manufacturers, and every individual connected with productive industry; and it was therefore an error of a much more dangerous character, and one that was followed by much more sweeping effects. Why, then, refuse a Committee to inquire into the consequences of that error, and to see whether it was not capable of amendment? It was a curious circumstance that no hon. nor even right hon. member of that House could state what was the exact amount of paper in circulation in the country. If the actual amount of paper in circulation could from time to time be correctly ascertained and made public, persons engaged in productive industry could then see the causes of their losses in many instances, and could apply a remedy to them if it was practicable. If the amount of paper money in circulation were published from time to time, especially that portion of it in circulation in the country, he was of opinion that great benefit would be derived therefrom by all the productive classes throughout the country. The evidence given before the Bank Charter Committee by the able men who had been examined, demonstrated the necessity of the inquiry which was now called for. He was ready to admit that the whole of this question rested upon the point whether it was possible for us to maintain our present engagements with the standard which had been established by the Act of 1819. The noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, said that was a permanent standard of value, and that it had been necessary for the prosperity and existence of the country to return to such a standard. He would ask, then, whether gold was really a standard of permanent value? He had heard much of the omnipotence of Parliament; but he would defy Parliament, or any other body of men, to render gold a standard of permanent value, and to say, that, henceforth and for ever, gold should be worth *3l.* 17*s.* 10½*d.* an ounce. They might as well thus attempt to fix permanently the price of gold as the price of any other commodity, exposed as it was to similar variations as to supply and demand, and of course to similar variations in its price in the market. The price of gold per ounce in the reign of Queen Elizabeth was *2l.* 15*s.* 10*d.*; in the reign of James 1st, *3l.* 2*s.* 1*d.*; in the reign of Charles 2nd, *3l.* 14*s.* 2*d.*; and in the reign of George 1st, the price of gold per ounce became *3l.* 17*s.* 10½*d.* That statement was sufficient to show that gold was not and could not be, a permanent standard of value. It had varied in price according to the supply of the commodity; and he believed there was no doubt that it was every day becoming more and more enhanced in value. If that was the case—and he was sure that upon inquiry it would be found to be so—in what difficulties might not this country be plunged, and into what a scrape might it not get, if, with a currency regulated by a standard that varied according to the supply to be obtained from other countries, we should happen to be involved again in a general war? By retaining the present standard, they nailed down the currency to a standard that was continually altering. He, for one, was opposed to retaining a metal as a standard, which was enhancing in value every day. The result of retaining such a standard would be a contraction of the circulating medium, fatal to the productive industry of the country. It required no arguments to prove, that in the present state of the country, it required much more extended currency than it possessed, for instance, in the reign of William 3rd. In the reign of King William, the debt was only 16,000,000*l.*, the interest of the debt 500,000*l.*, and the taxes only 4,000,000*l.*; and therefore it was plain that the state of things in 1832 required not only that the mass of the currency should be much greater, but that the currency should have in itself the power of expansion. Why should they measure their currency by a measure which was, as he contended, progressively becoming shorter and stricter? Was it not clear that their doing so tended to plunge the country, and that too, at no distant period, into immense difficulties and embarrassments? He was as ready to admit as the greatest stickler for the maintenance of the public faith, that the country was bound to keep its faith with the public creditor; but he could not understand why we should be called upon to pay back in an enhanced metallic currency, debts that had been contracted in a paper currency. He could not understand the justice or the equity of such a proceeding. He thought that it was necessary to institute this inquiry, if for no other purpose, to see whether the establishment of a silver standard might not be more advantageous to the country, under existing circumstances, than a gold standard. He was of opinion that it would, because it was progressive in its quantity, because it would afford the paper money a power of expansion, and because a greater amount of paper circulation could be borne, without any injury to the public faith, with a silver standard. The introduction of such a standard would be most beneficial to the productive classes, and especially to the agricultural interest. It appeared to him, that the landowners, with the best intentions in the world to promote their own interests, had never gone about the matter in the true and proper way. They always seemed to think that great dangers were to be apprehended from the importation of foreign corn, that their well-doing and their well-being were inconsistent with the full-feeding of the people at large, and that, in a word, the prosperity of the landed interest depended upon the suffering of every other class of the community. He differed from them in that view of their interests, and he was sure, that experience would fully bear out his opinions. He would appeal for proof to the successive Corn-laws that had been passed for the protection, as it was called, of the agricultural interest. Had those laws rendered that interest prosperous? Was it not, on the contrary, in a most declining state? Had not the Corn-laws of 1823 sunk, a dead letter, to the ground? At the very time that the Government and the Legislature were endeavouring to fix the price of wheat at 80*s*. a quarter, the change that had been made in our monetary system rendered it absolutely impossible to retain it at such a price. The same course was pursued in 1827 with similar success. He would now tell the landlords that, with a gold standard, always enhancing in value, it would be impossible that the price of corn should be higher than 50*s*. a-quarter, if it should be so high. He thought that even those who were the advocates for the maintenance of the present system ought not to oppose this Motion; for if a delusion prevailed on the subject, it would be dissipated at once by inquiry. If, on the one hand, those who thought that the distress of the country arose from the pressure occasioned by the contraction of the currency were in error, it surely would be an important thing to show by inquiry that their views were erroneous; and if on the other hand, it should be found that relief would be derived from a recurrence to a silver standard (he would not go over the reasons for recurring to such a standard, detailed as they were in the admirable evidence given by the hon. member for Essex in 1828, and in the able speech of the hon. member for Whitehaven in 1830) if it should be found, he repeated, from the result of such inquiry, that the introduction of a silver standard would be the means of affording practical relief to the country, consistent with the maintenance of the public credit, would not the inquiry be attended by most beneficial consequences? In supporting the Motion of the hon. member for Whitehaven, he begged to be understood as not going further with him than as to the propriety of inquiry into the subject. Of this he was sure, that if a measure were brought forward for introducing a silver standard (and he thought such a measure should emanate from the Government), the effect of it would be to increase the capital, and to stimulate the productive industry, of the country to an incalculable extent.

Mr. *Clay* said, he had but a few observations to make on this subject, which, however, was one of considerable importance. He wished to remove the apprehensions and dissipate the delusion which prevailed upon the subject. He thought the hon. member for the City of London (Mr. Grote) and the right hon. member for Manchester (Mr. P. Thomson) had in their speeches last night completely set aside the clamour as to the great distress of the country. One topic, however, was not sufficiently adverted to. He had heard much vague declamation, but no attempt to connect the existence of distress with the resumption of cash payments. The opponents of the Motion of the hon. Member (Mr. Attwood) had left nothing else with which to grapple. It was assumed that the Act of 1819 narrowed the currency, and therefore reduced prices; but no proof whatever had been offered to support such an hypothesis as had been advanced by the supporters of this Motion. He would for the present, admit that the reduction of the circulating medium might be made a fair ground of argument; but, supposing it to be established, still it would be necessary to show, that the depreciation in the price of commodities of all sorts was such as would lead to the distressed state of the country. He could show, in the first place, that the distress was not so great as had been stated; that the issue of currency was not greatly diminished; and that if it had been diminished, the diminution was far less than was usually supposed. He thought the measure of 1819 was a wise and wholesome one; and he would not consent on this occasion to alter the state of our monetary system. The reduction in prices was trifling; but, trifling or not, it was not caused by the resumption of cash payments. Quite the reverse, as he would be able to show from the most irresistible evidence. The maximum of the Bank circulation was in 1817, when it reached to 29,543,780*l*., and the mean amount of the circulation for the whole year, was 28,274,880*l*. In the next year, 1818, it fell to 27,200,000*l*., and the year after to 26,200,000*l*. That was somewhat below the level of the three years prior to 1817, when the circulation was respectively, in 1814, 26,927,650*l*.; in 1815, 26,887,010*l*.; in 1816, 26,574,840*l*. There could be no doubt that the great increase of Bank of England paper in 1817 was to supply the deficiency occasioned by the want of country bank paper, nor that its contraction in 1818 was caused by the restoration of that paper. Thus, the number of commissions of bankruptcy against country banks, was, in 1814, twenty-nine; in 1815, twenty-six; and in 1816, thirty-seven. The effect was, to diminish the circulation of country notes, and the bank of England supplied the deficiency. A similar train of circumstances took place in 1825, 1826, and 1827. In 1818, the country issue increased, as would appear from the stamp returns; the stamps for country bank notes having increased in 1817, from 9,075,958, to, in 1818, 12,316,868. It was certain that the general circulation of country bank notes was greater in 1818 than it had been in any year since 1809. There could be no doubt that it had increased four or five millions between 1816 and 1818. At that time the circulation of the Bank of England was about 25,000,000*l.* In the subsequent years the country bank circulation did not much diminish. Mr. Burgess made a very accurate calculation of the reduction of the amount of country issues: and it was stated, that that reduction did not amount to more than two per cent in consequence of the Act of 1819. Mr. Burgess's table was this:—

COUNTRY BANK CIRCULATION.

1818 assumed as 100.		*l.*	*s.*	*d.*	
1819 ..	decrease	1	15	0	per cent from 1818
1820 ..	ditto ..	5	16	10	.. ditto
1821 ..	ditto ..	6	19	0	.. ditto
1922 ..	ditto ..	11	13	1	.. ditto
1823 ..	ditto ..	11	18	0	.. ditto
1824 ..	ditto ..	4	11	9	.. ditto
1825 ..	increase	2	5	6	.. on ditto

From these facts it was evident that the paper circulation of the country was at a great height in 1818, and that after the Act passed for the resumption of cash payments it continued at a great height. In the month of February, 1819, the Bank of England circulation was 25,126,700*l.* It then held securities to the amount of 30,000,000*l.* At the close of 1819 the issues had increased to 25,252,690*l.*, and its securities had increased to 31,700,000*l.* The bullion then in the Bank was, 3,595,350*l.*: so that several months after the Act of 1819 passed, the Bank, instead of making preparations for resuming cash payments, had increased its issues, augmented its securities, and diminished its stock of gold. In 1820, the mean amount of Bank of England notes was 23,920,080*l.*; in round numbers, 24,000,000*l.*, or a diminution of something more than four per cent upon the mean circulation of 1819. The country bank circulation had also, according to Mr. Burgess's table fallen four per cent, as compared with 1819. Now, although, for the diminution of the country bank circulation, causes quite independent of the approaching resumption of cash payments might be assigned; yet the diminution of 1820, in that circulation, as well as the diminution of four per cent in the Bank of England circulation may be ascribed to preparation for the approaching change in our monetary system. Would the House believe, after the assertions so confidently made of the astounding effects produced by the Bill of 1819, that the trifling contraction of the currency which he had stated, was absolutely the whole amount of the effect produced by that Bill upon the circulation, and the measure of its whole operation upon prices. It was deserving of remark, that the variation between 1819 and 1820 was less than had occurred in several years of the Bank restriction, and than had subsequently occurred; and that the amount of Bank circulation in 1820, was fifty per cent above the amount during the highest price ever known of corn in 1801, and very greatly above the amount of the Bank circulation during the range of high prices from 1809 to 1813. In May, 1821, the Bank recommenced cash payments. On the 28th of February, 1821, the note circulation was 23,884,920*l.*, and on the 31st of August, 20,295,300*l.*; therefore the diminution was 3,589,620*l.* But there was gold issued by the 31st of August to the amount of 5,657,053*l.*, and the excess of circulating medium, therefore, was 2,067,433*l.* In 1822, August 31, the note circulation was 17,464,790*l.*; and the further issue of gold was 5,417,411*l.*, making the whole circulating medium, as depending on the Bank of England, 28,536,254*l* In 1823, August 31, the note circulation was 19,231,240*l.*, and the further issue of gold, 2,633,328*l.*, making a total circulating medium of 32,936,032*l.*, which showed an excess of circulation, so far as the Bank of England was concerned, of between four and five millions, above the mean amount of the highest year before the resumption, and more than 3,000,000*l.* above the very highest amount that the note circulation alone had ever reached. By reference to Mr. Burgess's table, it would be seen that the country circulation had fallen between eleven and twelve per cent in 1822 and 1823, as compared with 1818; but estimating that fall, upon the very highest amount at which the country paper in 1818 had ever been estimated, it would not nearly compensate for the increase of paper and gold issue by the Bank of England, and therefore the circulating medium of the country, in 1822, was as large, and in 1823 larger than it had ever previously been, though those years were constantly referred to, as demonstrating the vast effect of the measure of 1819. If it were said that a part of the gold might have left the country, he replied that the exchange on Paris, from May, 1821, to August, 1823, ranged from twenty to sixty centimes above par, and the stock of gold at the bank increased from 11,890,000*l.* to 12,650,000*l.* The hon. Baronet who had preceded him had stated that, on the restoration of the metallic standard, the paper circulation vanished into thin air, and the currency became contracted. But if there were one effect which could be clearly traced to the measure of 1819, it was that it produced an excess of currency in 1824; and he believed, that if the Restriction Act had been in existence, the Bank would not have ventured to issue the same amount of paper money, as it did of gold and paper united, at that time. It would have taken alarm earlier, and not have contracted with Government for the purchase of the dead weight annuity. Up to August, 1824, the exchanges continued favourable, and a further issue of gold, of more than 4,000,000*l.* had taken place. At the end of 1824, the exchanges began to turn against us. The Bank, the conduct of which, since 1825, had been unexceptionable, ought to have taken earlier warning by the fall of the exchanges in 1824, and contracted its circulation. In 1824, the circulation of the country bankers increased, to within four per cent of what it was in 1818; and there could be no doubt, that in 1824 and in the beginning of 1825, the circulating medium was the largest in amount ever known in this country. The latter part of 1825 must be put out of consideration, in any general view of our monetary system, except inasmuch as the calamities of that period might serve to warn us against the vicious system to which they might be traced. The demand for gold which took place at that period was not made with a view to exportation, but in order to substitute it for the 1*l.* and 2*l.* notes of the country banks, which had fallen into discredit. After 1825, we lose the advantage of Mr. Burgess's valuable information, though we are not without evidence of a conclusive character as to the amount of our circulation. The circulation of the Bank of England, had consisted, of course, since 1821, almost wholly of notes of 5*l.* and upwards, with the exception of a small and brief re-issue of 1*l.* and 2*l.* notes in 1826. The mean amount of large notes in circulation seven years before 1821, was 18,332,679*l.*, seven years since 1821, it was 19,556,653*l.*, being an increase of 1,223,974*l.* The issues of gold by the Bank of England were as follows—

In the last three months of	1825	£2,477,197	0
.. ..	1826	1,668,309	0
.. ..	1827	1,558,215	10
.. ..	1828	2,705,818	10
.. ..	1829	2,619,557	0
.. ..	1830	1,940,052	0
		£12,969,149	0

AMOUNT OF BULLION AND COIN IN THE BANK.

	in 1826	£ 5,559,150	0
.. ..	1827	10,359,000	0
.. ..	1828	9,998,125	0
.. ..	1829	7,008,275	0
.. ..	1830	10,222,575	0

During the whole of these years the exchanges were so much in favour of England that it was impossible gold could have been exported. The amount of gold issued by the Bank from 1819 to May, 1832, was 42,000,000*l.*, of which 6,000,000*l.* only returned to the Bank, so that 36,000,000*l.* remained in circulation, subject, of course, to the fluctuations of amount produced by the variations of the exchange. They had next to inquire what was the circulation of the country banks subsequently to 1829. He would first refer to the evidence of Mr. Vincent Stuckey, of Somersetshire, who said, that the place of the small notes in the circulation of his several banks had been supplied by gold; that the suppression of the small notes had in no degree lessened their power or inclination to afford accommodation to their customers. Mr. Becket, of Leeds, gave similar evidence, stating that since the suppression of the 1*l.* notes the circulation of their 5*l.* notes had increased to some extent, and the remaining deficiency was made up by gold. Mr. Loyd, of Manchester, gave similar evidence. Before the suppression of small notes, his bank issued 25,000*l.* a-week to different customers to pay wages; they now paid 25,000*l.* in sovereigns. which fulfilled the same functions. Mr. Rothschild said, there was a perpetual tendency of the precious metals to flow into England,—the balance of the exchanges must always be in our favour, as we imported raw produce, and exported the same produce, as manufactured goods increased three and four-fold in value. Mr. Rothschild thought that the skill, industry, and capital of England would render all the nations of the world our tributaries. Mr. Gurney, a gentleman largely engaged in bill transactions, was also of opinion, that our circulation subsequent to the resumption of cash payments was fully equal to what it was before that resumption. To sum up what he had proved, he would say, that in 1820, when the circulation of the Bank was the smallest, it was double that which it was from 1800 to 1804, when the prices of corn and other commodities were never complained of. That it increased between 1824 and 1825; that since that time the amount of *5l.* notes had increased; that prior to 1826 there was no diminution of country circulation; and that on the whole before 1826 there was no diminution whatever, but a positive increase of the circulating medium of the country. How then could the distress be deduced from the amount of the present circulating medium? It was idle, vain and absurd to draw any such unwarrantable inference, and no motion was ever offered to the House more than the present destitute of all foundation. Gentlemen, in this discussion, also, had confined themselves to the issues of bank notes and gold, while they totally lost sight of the enormous amount of transactions which took place through the medium of bills of exchange. These bills formed a material element in the consideration of the circulating medium, although its operation was to the general eye unseen. He would not go over the various causes which had occurred since the peace to depress prices, but of this he was certain, that any depression that had taken place was not occasioned by legislative measures, but by other events. The Legislature was, therefore to be absolved from all blame; and the question which they were now called upon to determine was, whether it would be wise or prudent to make a change in the currency the effect of which would be to derange all existing contracts. This he was persuaded was the object which the hon. member for Whitehaven had in view, for the terms of that hon. Gentleman's motion must convince every one who read it that his design was to produce an alteration in the present standard value of money which would lead to a depreciation. It should, however, be borne in mind that no experiment that might be made to raise prices would succeed, for no increase of prices that could be effected in this country would influence in the least the prices abroad, and it was the foreign market, and not the home demand, by which prices were regulated. In the article of cotton, for instance, there was a large surplus, and as that surplus must find a market abroad, whenever that was the case prices must be low. Thus the surplus on hand of any article, or the quantity of stock, had a good deal to do in regulating its price. It might be possible to cheat the people of this country, but they could not impose upon the foreigner; for he would defy them to raise the price of any article connected with the export trade, and find a market abroad for it. He would not undertake to say what the remedies were that ought to be applied to the evil, but he was satisfied it would be most injudicious to take any step that might occasion a breach of the national faith with the public creditor. He wished that joint-stock banking companies were incorporated and established, for it was his opinion that such a system of banking would go far to relieve the country from the difficulties in which it was now placed, and afford a safe foundation for the circulating medium. He doubted exceedingly the policy of altering the present standard value of money; but he should not object to rendering a tender in silver at the market price a legal tender, which might enlarge the basis of our currency without causing depreciation, or introducing the confusion of a double standard. It would be the means of keeping the precious metals in the country, and would, besides, give a manifest advantage by extending our trade with those countries in which silver was the staple commodity. He concluded, by expressing it as his opinion, that the Motion ought to be rejected, and by declaring that he would give his cordial support to the Amendment of the noble Lord.

Mr. *Wolryche Whitmore* said, that he should not do his duty if he contented himself with giving a silent vote upon a subject of such importance as the present. If the Motion of the hon. member for Whitehaven succeeded, more injury would be done to the country at large than by any other expedient that could be thought of. The result of it would lead at once to a depreciation of the most alarming kind, and he did not think the condition of the country rendered so desperate an expedient justifiable. He would not go over the ground his right hon. friend had travelled last night;

but this he would say, that, however convenient it might be for those who sought an alteration in the currency to depreciate the condition of the country, he would defy them to make it apparent that it was not advancing in prosperity. He would ask the House to look at the state of trade, and he was certain it would find by any inquiry it might make, that considerable advance had been made in the manufactures, commerce, wealth, and the general prosperity of the country. This was an incontrovertible fact, but it was nevertheless true, that the advance of wealth and prosperity which had taken place was accompanied by distress among particular classes. He admitted that such was the case; and he further considered it to be incumbent on the House to endeavour to remove that distress by every means in its power. He fully concurred with the hon. member for the Tower Hamlets, that it was in the power of the Legislature to alleviate the existing distress, and promote the rapid advance of prosperity; but then this could, in his opinion, only be done by destroying monopolies, extending trade, and developing the resources of the country. If the suggestion which he had just thrown out were adopted, and accompanied by a judicious system of emigration, he was convinced that a very short period indeed would elapse before the country was relieved, and the House saved the trouble of attending to the subject. It was not true, as the hon. member for Whitehaven had stated, that the changes which had taken place in the currency of the country had been the occasion of low prices. On the contrary, these alterations had little, if any, effect upon prices, compared with the improvements which had been made in manufacturing processes. If the House would allow him, he would give a striking proof of this fact from Mr. Babbage's work on the "Economy of Manufactures." Mr. Babbage said, 'Twenty years since a brass knob for the locks of doors was made in Birmingham; the price at that time being 13*s.* 4*d.* per dozen. The same article is now manufactured, having the same weight of metal, and an equal, or, in fact, a slightly superior finish, at 1*s.* 9½*d.* per dozen. One circumstance which has produced this economy in the manufacture is, that the lathe on which these knobs are finished, is now turned by a steam-engine, so that the workman, relieved from that labour, can make them twenty times as fast as he did formerly.' He quoted that merely to show that a reduction of price had taken place wholly independent of our monetary system. There was one other point to which he would allude. The hon. member for Newcastle (Sir Henry Willoughby) had assumed, that gold had increased in value, and that the pressure of which he complained arose out of that circumstance. The hon. Gentleman was, however, mistaken in imagining that the value of gold had increased. All the old sources from whence gold had been derived were still in a state of production, and new sources of supply, especially in North Carolina, had recently been opened. It was obtained too, by less labour. A correspondent of his, on whom he placed great reliance, stated, that the produce of the gold and silver mines in Mexico had fallen from 26,000,000 of dollars in 1809, to about 8,000,000 in 1825 and 1826. In 1829 it advanced to 12,000,000, and he believed it had since increased to about 16,000,000. The bullion exported, without payment of duty, was probably 4,000,000 more, making about 20.000,000. His correspondent added: 'I am quite confident, that if there were a good government in South America, they would carry the produce of the precious metals there to a greater extent than at any former period; and this is the opinion of the best informed persons. The produce of the mines in Carolina, appears, by a passage from the President of Congress to be as follows:—"I may state here, that the increased amount, perhaps, will not be considered very large, still it shows that there has been a positive increase since the year 1824. The produce of the gold mines in North and South Carolina, amounted, in 1824, in value, to 15,000 dollars; in 1825, it was 17,000; in 1826, it was 20,000; in 1827, it was 21,000; in 1828, it was 46,000; in 1829, it was 140,000; in 1830, it was 466,000; in 1831, it was 520,000; and, in 1832, it was 678,000."' In the Brazils, there had also been a considerable increase in the produce of gold, as compared with former years. A gentleman who had just returned from the Brazils, and who was extensively connected with the mines, stated: 'The present produce of the gold mines in the Brazils, which was about 300,000*l.*, is now nearly 700,000*l.* In the same way the Russia gold mines are in a state of great activity. Thus it is stated by those who have a knowledge of the subject, that the same principle which has produced an extension in the supplies, with respect to sugar, coffee, and other articles of com-

'merce is in operation, or about to be in operation, with respect to the precious metals. All concur in stating this—that, in countries where the precious metals are produced—especially in South America—there does exist the power of producing them to an immense extent.' Though, at one period, the produce of the precious metals had fallen off, there was now reason to believe, that they were again increasing in quantity. Before they voted for the hon. Gentleman's Motion, he implored the House well to consider the effect which any alteration in the present monetary system would produce. The hon. Gentleman had told them that there would be no dishonesty in such a change; but was the introduction of a measure which would have the effect of driving every species of capital out of the country expedient? Such would be the effect of any alteration depressing the currency; and he, therefore, hoped the House would not consent to the Motion.

Mr. *Fryer* said, that although he did not agree with the hon. member for Whitehaven in his views with regard to the alteration of the currency, yet he could not avoid denying the correctness of the statements of the right hon. the Vice-President of the Board of Trade, who attempted to persuade the House that there was no distress in the country. At Wolverhampton and at Bilston the Poor-rates were nearly doubled within the last two years; and yet there were not in Great Britain two places more stable in the property of the manufacturers. How did the right hon. Gentleman account for that? He knew the state of those places well. He knew that the manufacturers were dreadfully distressed. The industrious classes might be distressed either through a want of employment or through a want of sufficient food procured by that employment. And that was the case in those districts. It was stated by the Poor-law Commission that the affairs of those parishes were well managed. There was no disputing that; and yet the Poor-rates were increasing. How did the right hon. Gentleman account for that? How could it be accounted for but by the general distress of the country? And he said that all the adjoining parishes which were connected with manufactures were in the same state. Although the iron trade had risen a little, it had not risen to a remunerating price. This was owing to the restriction of the trade of the country. If men were employed to-day, why should they not be employed to-morrow? It was on account of the restriction trade. How else was the condition of the factory children to be accounted for, which constituted nearly one-half of the population of Manchester? But look at the agricultural counties: what said the Report upon the Poor-laws but that they were in a state of pauperism? This was the case in every district connected with agricultural pursuits. Were not whole parishes untenanted? And how did the right hon. Gentleman account for that? Look at London also—look at the great thoroughfares from Charing Cross to the Bank—and what could be seen but untenanted houses, disengaged shops, and unoccupied wharfs? How was that accounted for? There was never till lately a house to let in Fleet-street or Cornhill. There must be some reason for all this. And yet the Vice-President of the Board of Trade, that one-eyed political economist, denied that distress existed. And how was it proved? Did the servants of the Government—did the Vice-President of the Board of Trade, suffer by it? No. Did the army or the navy suffer? No. He grudged them nothing. Those who fought for their country ought to be well paid; but not those who did not fight, and never would fight. Well, he asked again did the pensioners or the placemen suffer? No. They had their pay regularly, and did not suffer. Did the fundholders suffer? They were entitled to their pay; but who was to pay them? The labour of the country ought not to be mortgaged—the land ought to pay the debt, for the land had had the benefit of it. Did the mortgagees of land suffer? No. They ought not to suffer. They had lent their money on a security which ought to be good and valid. Then look at the land owners. Did they suffer? No, no, no. Let him be heard out. They insisted upon the pound of flesh from their tenants; and hitherto they had not suffered; but they would, and that was the reason why the currency question was coming forward. The land-owners wanted to raise their rent by a false and fictitious currency. He wished to have inquiry, but he was no advocate for a depreciated currency. But what cared the Government about these matters, as long as the taxes were paid, and the Budget full? They replied, what have we to do with the complaints of the people? But he asked, would they who lived by their daily-earned bread be satisfied with this answer? Would the ship owner, the merchant, the manufacturer, the shopkeeper, the operative—would any one of these be satisfied with the answer? No. The men in power felt an interest for the monopolist; but who felt, or thought, or took care of the people? He spoke for all. What was the cause of the great distress now existing? Not the currency, but restricted trade and monopolies; and the unequal pressure of the national obligations caused the distress of the people. He maintained that the farmer had been injured. By Peel's Robbery Bill—yes, he would call it Peel's Robbery Bill—by that Bill the farmers had been obliged to pay their rent in a currency of a higher value than that in which they contracted. He thought that ought to be remedied. He was of opinion that we ought to have paper money, but that the paper money ought to be made by the Government. The evils of the country required a remedy which the House had not yet heard alluded to. Monopoly was a great curse to the country. We ought to break up the monopoly of the timber trade—we ought to break up the monopoly of the sugar trade; and till that was done no good would be done. Indeed he believed that the monopolists were the curse of the country. He would not allow himself to be put down by cries of question. He advanced nothing but what was just and honest; he did not support an opinion merely because it was expedient, nor would he vote with the men who carried the Catholic question because it was expedient; no, no, he would do no such thing. The evils of the country were for the most part occasioned by these monopolies. The corn monopoly was the first which must be done away with. While that tax existed the masters would not be able to pay for ten hours' labour what they now paid for fourteen or sixteen hours' labour. Till that tax was done away with, the poorer classes would get no benefit. The Government had now the power to do away with this tax—but would they do away with it? They had the power, he repeated, and some day it must be abolished. They had done what they could not undo—they had opened the door of that House to a power which could no longer be resisted—they had opened it to the people, and the Representatives of the people now stood there ready to grapple with the oligarchy of the landlords, and they must and would have the victory. What else would be the use of Reform? Reform was only good for what would follow it. The Ministers would not, perhaps, use the power they possessed—they were like the man with the ass, who wished to please everybody, and who pleased nobody; they would—he was going to use a strong expression, but he would only say they would be turned out of their places. But they could not stop the Repeal of the Corn-tax. He said the Corn-laws must be repealed. He recommended them not to resist too long. What had occurred in ancient Rome when the people wanted to assert their rights against the oligarchy who oppressed them? It was truly said that *multis utile bellum:* Entertaining, as he did, the strongest opinion as to the necessity of repealing the Corn-tax, he should wish to see the Resolution proposed by the hon. member for Whitehaven altered, so that for "Monetary System," should be inserted "Corn Laws," and the inquiry should be how far the Corn-laws had injured the agricultural, manufacturing and commercial interests of the country

Mr. *Cayley* solicited the indulgence of the House, as he had never before trespassed on its attention. The hon. Member who had just sat down had said, that the landlords had not suffered as greatly as the other classes of the community; and he had given as a proof of that their unpaid rents and untenanted parishes. Then the hon. Member had said, that every interest now looked for protection through combination. Why, was not that a proof that this measure had been too long resisted? The House of Commons had been repeatedly called upon to go thoroughly into the subject of the Motion of his hon. friend the member for Whitehaven, and it had refused to do so until the country had ceased to consult it for general protection. But the hon. Member had said the landlords had exacted their bond even to the letter. Was that the case? Assuredly not. The landlords, instead of having exacted their bond, had lowered their rents from thirty to fifty per cent. If he were not mistaken the noble Lord (Lord Althorp) had stated to him that he had reduced his rents forty-five per cent. In his opinion the landowners had suffered more than the other classes. Many men in humble circumstances had in the time of war saved 60*l.* and with that purchased an acre of land. That land was now worth 45*l.* Other labourers had saved 60*l.*, and purchased into the Funds. The parties who had so done now held property worth 78*l.* He asked, therefore, who claimed the pound of flesh, the landowner or the fundholder? The hon. member for Wolverhampton

(Mr. Fryer) called for a Repeal of the Corn-laws. If that alteration was to prove a benefit to the community it must be by lowering the price of corn. How would that replenish the empty parishes, or enable the existing tenants better to pay their rents? Besides, let him call attention to the fact that when the price of corn was at the highest the country was acknowledged to be in a most flourishing condition. Thus, when the price of wheat was 90*s*., Mr. Huskisson, as a Minister of the Crown, declared that the country was in a highly prosperous condition. But if they looked at another period, 1815, when the price of wheat was much lower, they found that there was a cry of distress. And further, if they approached nearer to the present time, and referred to what had occurred in 1819, 1820, 1821, and 1822, they would find that the average price of wheat was 57*s*. and that then the distress was general and severe. Indeed so great was it that it led to the Act of Lord Londonderry (the One-pound Note Act), who raised the price of wheat, for it soon averaged 64*s*.; and when that alteration had been effected they heard from the Chancellor of the Exchequer that at no preceding period had this country been more prosperous. He asked, therefore, if in the face of those facts it would be contended that any relief was to be expected by a mere reduction in the price of corn? The other hon. member for Wolverhampton (Mr. Wolryche Whitmore) had opposed the Motion, and had said, that he had a remedy for the distress which existed. Now upon turning to the Order Book it was not difficult to see, that the remedy contemplated by the hon. Member was an alteration of the Corn Laws, and some dealing with reference to the precious metals. He had already examined what benefit was likely to arise from the repeal of the Corn Laws. He would now advert to the precious metals. It was proved beyond doubt that the general supply of precious metals had diminished. He did not, however, believe that a reduced supply had caused this country to suffer, for he was bound to take into consideration that their export to the East had stopped. Now, if he understood anything upon the subject, this was clear, that if the precious metals were the sole medium of circulation the prices of articles must depend upon the supply of precious metals. But the hon. member for the Tower Hamlets said, he could not see how prices were dependent upon the amount of circulation. Surely if there was a given quantity of gold, and that remained stationary, while the quantity of articles of sale increased, the price those articles would bring, would be reduced in proportion to the increase in the quantity of goods. Then the hon. member for the Tower Hamlets had said, he did not see how the value of the precious metals could affect the prices of the country. As a proof that such was the fact he would suppose a case. Suppose such a depreciation of silver that it should be coined into 8*s*. the ounce; a bushel of corn brought from the Continent would exchange, say, for an ounce of silver, but this ounce in England was 8*s*.; therefore the bushel of wheat would, *cæteris paribus*, sell for 8*s*.; but when the ounce of silver was taken abroad, it would only sell, say for 5*s*., the continental price of silver. Thus prices might in England be nominally 8*s*., when abroad they were really only 5*s*. for the same commodity. The hon. Member would surely not contend that these nominal shillings would be of no advantage to the debtor in defraying a surreptitiously increased nominal debt. He would then apply himself to some of the observations which had fallen from the noble Lord (Lord Althorp) also to some which had fallen from the hon. member for London (Mr. Grote), and from the right hon. Vice-President of the Board of Trade. The noble Lord said, that as an honest man he must oppose the Motion. Doubtless the noble Lord spoke with sincerity, but certainly he (Mr. Cayley) did not presume too much when he said that, as an honest man, he would support the Motion. His views were different from those of the noble Lord, but they were conscientiously entertained. Now, he must say, that he did not quite understand the extent of the opposition of the noble Lord, for the noble Lord had not distinctly stated whether or not he objected to an inquiry into the distress of the country, or what sort of an inquiry he would support. Did the noble Lord mean to say, that he would admit of an inquiry into the existing distress, but that he would exclude from that inquiry all reference to, or consideration of, the effects produced by the currency? If the noble Lord did do so he could only illustrate his conduct in this way:—A motion is made in the Royal Society for an inquiry into the causes of a vitiated atmosphere, and the President proposes as an amendment that all reference to and consideration of the effects produced by oxygen gas should be excluded. Or if the noble Lord, while walking about his domains, should meet with a starving beggar, should say he wanted to relieve him, should call him into his room where there were smoking viands upon the table, but should prohibit him from touching them, the noble Lord would act as he was doing in regard to this Motion. The noble Lord was ready to allow inquiry but he excluded the oxygen from the investigation. The noble Lord did not contend that the present distress was not caused or increased by the present monetary system, but he contented himself with saying that that system should not be inquired into. Now really that declaration would not settle the matter. They had all heard of the celebrated contest between philosophers in this country and in America as to which were the best conductors, nobs or points. The great Franklin and his followers adopted the nobs, and parties in this country favoured the points; and the disputes were carried so far that George 3rd sent a message to the President of the Royal Society (Sir John Pringle), requesting him at once to decide the matter in favour of the points, and so end the dispute. Sir John, however, replied to his Majesty that the laws of nature were immutable, and all that the Society could do was not to say what they should be, but endeavour to discover what they actually were. So with the question before the House. The decision of the noble Lord, unless founded in truth would not effect its settlement. There was no Royal way to knowledge, nor any Ministerial road out of national distress, Judging from what had fallen from the noble Lord, he should have to conclude that an unreformed Parliament had the power to impose upon the country a bad monetary system, but that a reformed Parliament, with all its vaunted authority, had not sufficient power to remedy, or even to inquire into the evil. The noble Lord himself admitted, that the measure of 1819 had done a wrong, and yet he said there should be no redress. Was it just, or was there any process of reasoning or analogy by which it could be supported? Suppose a person had forged a will, and through the forgery obtained possession of an estate. Well, fifteen years after, the rightful heir found out that a forgery had been committed, was he not to enter upon his property because the wrong had been perpetrated? Or, to put a stronger case, suppose the person who had acquired the property by forgery had sold that property, and twenty-five years after, the rightful heir discovered the property, was he to be told, it was very true, the property ought to have been his, but that the present holder had purchased it, and therefore he must retain it? The gross injustice of such a proceeding would be too monstrous to be upheld for a moment. But the case of the currency was yet stronger. The parties who had suffered injury did not say restore to them every thing they had been deprived of, for the benefit done to the one would be more than counterbalanced by the injury done to the others; but they said, let there be a compromise—let such an arrangement be made as will not expose us to ruin, and yet will not injure you to any material degree. When the noble Lord and others had denied the prevalence of distress, the statements had surprised him. In proof of that distress he might quote a variety of documents. He held in his hand the table furnished by the hon. member for Oldham. [The hon. Member quoted the details, which have already been given at pages 361 and 954 vol. xvi.] Again, in 1822, the present Lord Chancellor (then Mr. Brougham) had stated that the only part of the country not then suffering from distress was the North Riding of Yorkshire. He had the honour to represent that district, and he thought his hon. colleague would bear him out when he stated that it was no longer so fortunate as in 1822. He held in his hand a letter from an eminent physician in Whitby who had practised in that neighbourhood for upwards of thirty years. From that letter it appeared that, notwithstanding the diminution of servants' wages from 28*l.* to 14*l.*, the farmers were failing in scores, that, in fact, such was the state of things that they must soon have relief or revolution. The hon. Member also read another letter, from which it appeared that dreadful distress was prevalent in Whitby and the neighbourhood. But he found also, in the divisions which had taken place in that House upon the question whether or not there should be inquiry into the distress, a proof of the conviction having increased — of the distress having become more pressing. In 1822, when Mr. Western brought forward the subject, 194 voted against, and only 30 for, his Motion. In 1830, when Mr. Davenport introduced the subject, his motion was lost by a majority of 255 to 87. And when, a few nights since, the hon. member for Birmingham submitted his Motion, the Noes were 194 only to 173 Ayes. That circumstance fully proved that in the minds of the Representatives of the people there was an increased conviction that the distress, instead of having diminished, had become more oppressive. With respect to the Poor-rates, to state the naked amount was a very fallacious way of putting the matter. The amount ought to be considered in connexion with that of the population and of the value of the circulating medium. From 1801 to 1811 the population had increased 14½ per cent; from 1811 to 1821 it had increased 17 per cent; and from 1821 to 1831 it had increased 16½ per cent. Now, in 1814, the number of commitments in England and Wales was 4,025, and in 1832 it was 14,947; showing an increase of crime, arising chiefly, as he should contend, from destitution, altogether disproportioned to the increase in the population. He was aware that some reduction ought to be made in the last amount, in consequence of the change effected by the Bills of the right hon. Baronet (Sir R. Peel), but, on the other hand, some additions ought to be made on account of the summary convictions by Magistrates, which were latterly greatly increased. Then, with respect to the Poor-rates. In 1812 they were 6,600,000*l.*; in 1813, 6,300,000*l.*; and in 1815, 6,100,000*l.* The average price of wheat during the whole period was 99*s.* per quarter. Taking that into consideration, and supposing the depreciation in the value of money was thirty per cent, it would follow that in the present circulation the amount of Poor-rate in the year 1813 was only 4,000,000*l.*; in the year 1814, only 3,600,000*l.*; and in 1815, the year of greatest depreciation, no more than 2,700,000*l.*—whereas in 1832 it was 8,600,000*l.*—or near 200 per cent more than it was in 1815. Besides, in 1822 various important improvements had been made in the expenditure of the Poor-rates, and so much more caution had been introduced in their application that, in his opinion, the burthen of the Poor-rates upon the country, instead of having nearly trebled, had quadrupled since 1815. Then, again, when he referred to the amount of emigration at different periods, he found strong reason to believe that the distress had gone on increasing. In the first year after the declaration of peace the number of emigrants to Canada was 1,250. From that time up to 1826 the average number each year was 9,000 and upwards. The number that passed through Quebec in 1827 was 15,862; in 1828, it was 12,697; in 1829, it was 15,945; in 1830, it was 28,100; and in 1831, it was 50,254. Further, if he turned to the account of the number of the Irish poor passed from Liverpool to Ireland, he found a great increase. In 1824 the number passed was 2,481, and, in 1831, it was 5,863; showing an increase of upwards of 100 per cent; and that increase he could not but attribute to the diminution of profitable employment. But if these statements were not enough to show that the distress had increased, and greatly, notwithstanding all that had fallen from the noble Lord and the Vice President of the Board of Trade, he would also refer to the number of insolvents during different periods. In 1814 the number was 1,893, in 1815 it was 2,862, and, not to trouble the House with an enumeration of the number in every year, in 1828 it was 3,263, and in 1829 it was 4,063. During the first four years of the period he had alluded to, the total number was only about 6,000, while the total number in the last four years was above 16,000. That there was great increased distress he thought could not be denied. But it was said, that the currency had nothing to do with the distress. That was a position to which he could not consent, for it was in opposition to evidence and to reason. In support of that view, the hon. Member quoted the evidence given by Mr. Palmer, Mr. Richards, Mr. Rothschild, and other gentlemen before the Committee on the Bank Charter, and said, that he would require no other proof of the propriety of acceding to the Motion of his hon friend the member for Whitehaven. He contended from this evidence it was plain that the distress under which the country laboured in 1815 and 1816 had been produced by a diminution of circulating medium to the amount of twenty-three per cent, and that a state of prosperity resulted from the increase of that medium in the years 1818 and 1819. Similar misery also was the condition of the country in 1822, when the circulating medium became again decreased; and similar prosperity was the result of an increase in the years 1823 and 1824. The question under consideration, it should be recollected, was not one in which political parties were marshalled in opposition. It was a great national question brought forward to attain a great national good. What was it the House had to decide? Simply whether there was in the Parliament of the country the power to relieve that distress under which the people laboured; and then whether, possessing that power, Parliament would have the honesty and determination to exert it. To deny to Parliament the possession of such a power would, in his opinion, be the height of absurdity. Whether it was prepared to exert it he feared was a far different and very uncertain consideration. It had been said that they should wait a little, for that, ere long, all things would find their level. He maintained, however, there was no necessity for delay, for that, in point of fact, the level so expected had been already attained. Did not the progress of emigration, did not the work-house, the prisons, and the treadmill, corroborate the assertion? Ireland was reduced to the level of Whitefootism, and England to the level of famine, and yet they were told to wait before they attempted legislative relief. There was but one other level to which, as yet, they had not arrived, and it would go well with the country if its advance could be stopped; he meant that by which the property of its people would be reduced to an absolute nothing. What, then, was to be done became the all-absorbing question. Extend the circulating medium, and raise the prices. They had the power to raise the prices, and he was certain it could be done with little or no injury to any class of the community. Did the House recollect what was the result which had attended the raising of the prices in 1807? Why the Ministers of the Crown of that day repeatedly declared in Parliament that it was attended with prosperous results to every branch of interest in the state. The holders of fixed annuities, it was said, would suffer; undoubtedly, in an abstract point of view, they would suffer, but, if the facilities for obtaining employment which a prosperous condition in the trade and commerce of the country would hold out were considered, he thought he should be fully justified in saying, that what was lost by the holder of fixed annuities on the one hand would be amply made up to him on the other. In the lower and middle classes of society, when employment was not to be obtained by the family of an annuity holder, they were thrown back on it for support; while, when employment was abundant, and the country in a state of prosperity, the annuity remained untouched and unimpaired. With regard to an increased circulating medium, what did he want? Certainly not an unlimitted paper currency. What he desired to have was an inquiry first, as to whether a silver standard was practicable; and, secondly, whether the system of banking could not be rendered so perfect as, without endangering the security of property, to admit the issuing of notes without reserve. Again, he repeated, he would never sanction an unlimited issue of paper without full responsibility on the part of the issuers. Generally speaking, he was not an advocate for free trade, but least of all kinds of free trade would he advocate that of paper currency. Earnestly entreating the House to weigh well their decision, he would conclude the observations he had to offer. If relief were afforded to the country—if Parliament evinced at least an anxiety to consider what remedy could be adopted—his solemn conviction was, that there existed no cause for fear—but if, on the contrary, nothing were done—if the people were longer to continue hopeless—no man could answer for the results. Grant but what the hon. member for Whitehaven proposed, and a child might guide the team of Government with a silken cord. Refuse it, and an angel from heaven would fail in controlling it. Between "relief and revolution" were they about to decide, and sincerely did he pray that God might inspire the Ministers of the Crown to grant that which they had now the power to grant, but which very shortly they would have neither the power to grant or object to. If relief were granted all would yet be well; but, if denied, ere long the floodgates which controlled the waters of popular feeling would burst, and the country be deluged by one wide torrent of dismay, revolution, and anarchy.

Mr. *Baring* felt justified, no less by the frequent occasions in which his opinions relating to the subject of currency, and banking had been canvassed, than by the magnitude and immense importance of the question before the House, to request its attention for a very short period. The main, indeed the sole, question on which the opinion of the House was to be expressed was, whether it would be justified in concurring in an arbitrary departure from the existing standard of the country? This was the abstract question, divested of all those shades in which its originators sought to envelop it, on which the House would have to decide, and consequently would constitute the topic to which he meant to apply his observations. Of the importance of the subject, or of the suspense with which the decision of the House was awaited by the country, he need say nothing. Every individual throughout Great Britain connected in any way with property or with trade was on the tiptoe of expectation to know what the wisdom of their Reformed Parliament was about to do with the present question. In fact, the country *en masse* was waiting to see whether the beauteous fruits of their Reform mania would prove a measure which, if carried into effect, would demonstrate to the world that Reform had given to the country a Parliament better suited for a country of savages, where the first elements of society were in full sway, than for a country which maintained that position among the nations of Europe which Great Britain had for years done. To contend that there was no pressure of distress in the country would be of course futile, even if necessary for the case which he proposed to submit. He would admit that something should be done to relieve that distress; but the principle to which he had to call the attention of the House was, whether, supposing the pressure of public distress tenfold what it was, the proposition of the hon. member for Whitehaven, in the first place, was justifiable; and, in the second, whether it was such a measure as held out reasonable expectations of relief from that condition to which the country was reduced. For his part he could scarcely conceive how a country where the state of things was necessarily very artificial, any man beyond the precincts of Bedlam could, with a view of relieving the distressed condition of the people, think of making a proposition, the effect of which would be to throw loose on the world the medium and measure by which property was valued. By what process of mind the hon. member for Whitehaven had worked himself into a belief of the expediency of such a proposition he, of course, knew not; but his doing so served, he thought, as a striking illustration of a principle often advanced, namely, that the brightest talents and highest abilities were at times liable to aberrations of the most unaccountable nature. He was perfectly willing to give the hon. member for Whitehaven the fullest credit for the perfect honesty and sincerity of the views which he had propounded concerning the currency, and he readily believed that the hon. Member was actuated by what he considered the good of the country; therefore, if during any observation he might offer, he should use the words spoliation, and other synonymous terms, he must be considered to use them simply, with reference to the effects which the proposed alteration would bring upon the property of the kingdom; he giving the hon. Member credit for equal honesty of opinion with that entertained by himself. It seemed to him, that the hon. Member, in his aspirations after the power of effecting monetary changes, would make a good Chancellor of the Exchequer—not, certainly, to the ordinary continental sovereigns, but he would make a good minister to the Grand Signior, to whom he would be invaluable, as his proposal formed, in fact, the usual Turkish budget. In the course of some researches which he had made relative to this subject, he had met with an account of the various depreciations of the currency which had taken place in Turkey. A French gentleman of the name of Joubard, a member of the Institute, had drawn out a chronological account of all the variations in the value of the Turkish piastre, from the time of Mahomet I., which was inserted in the annual publication of the French Board of Longitude, from which it appeared that a series of depreciations had been carried into effect at various epochs, the most conspicuous of which were those of 1823 and 1827. In the year 1823 the piastre was twice depreciated, and in 1827 the same, so that those years might be considered as having semi-annual budgets; and the value of the piastre was now reduced from 3*s.* to 3*d.* The gentleman, to whose industry these accounts were due, in a few observations annexed to them, says: 'that the alteration 'in the value of money in a state must be 'considered as a proof of great public misery, and also of a very vicious policy, was 'a fact which no longer admitted of doubt; 'for even in those countries where political 'economy was least understood, this truth 'was acknowledged, and that even the 'Turks themselves had at length their 'eyes opened to this fact.' And, notwithstanding this, his hon. friend had brought himself to think that the reformed Parliament wanted its eyes opened in a contrary sense to that of the Turks. He had been given to understand, that, in the early part of the evening, a conversation had taken place between the hon. member for Whitehaven, and the noble Lord (Lord Althorp) regarding the question under discussion, in which something like a disclaimer had been made by the former, of any intention to lower the standard of the country, and some intimation of the latter, that he entertained no intention of precluding, by his Amendment, an inquiry into the propriety of any alteration in the standard, as related to silver, or other circulation of bullion in the country. The disclosure of such intentions he thought, in some degree, satisfactory, and he wished it had been explicitly stated, that such an inquiry should take place. At the same time, the House should disclaim any intention of sanctioning the lowering the standard of value, or that it contemplated such means of relieving the pressure of distress as had been now proposed. He was ready to admit, and had done so on all the discussions which had arisen on the subject, from that on the Bullion Report to the latest discussion—that the settlement made in 1819 was not a fair nor judicious settlement; and he was therefore willing that Parliament should give a distinct pledge to the country, that it would hereafter go into the consideration, whether the circulating medium of the country could not be improved. He stated, at the time, that he did not agree in the expediency of the course which was pursued, and every day's experience had tended to convince him that he had taken a correct view of the subject. Of course, he could not take upon himself to say in what manner the House would decide; but he believed that every one of those Gentlemen who would give a vote for this Motion, had formed, in his own mind, a scheme as to the standard of value in the country. Of this, however, he was sure, that if this House were to pledge itself to such a depreciation of the currency as the supporters of the Motion contemplated, the general feeling of the community—he meant of those who were capable of forming an opinion—would be that the present was a Parliament in which there was no security whatever for property. He should feel it to be an insult to the House to enter into any discussion as to the precious metals being the best medium for the circulation of value through the world; but Mr. Gallatin had placed that point in so clear a light, that he could not refrain from calling the attention of the House to the expressions which he had used respecting it, in his report upon the currency of America. Having quoted the opinion of Mr. Gallatin, which, he said, was confirmed by the most ancient records now in existence, he called upon the House to hesitate before it came to a vote which would throw to the winds all the experience of past ages, and all the accumulated information of the present times. What, in point of fact, was the nature of the proposal so vaguely put forth by the hon. member for Whitehaven? Did he desire an unlimited issue of paper currency? But a very few evenings had passed over since a motion had been made by the hon. member for Birmingham, in proposing which, the hon. Member distinctly told the House that nothing would relieve the country but an issue of thirty millions a-year in notes for a few years, adding, that when they had served their purpose, they might be all burned together. [Mr. *Thomas Attwood*—No, no; I said nothing of the kind.] Perhaps the hon. Member might not have meant to burn the notes when they had served his purpose, but rather like a Dutch Minister in olden times, to convert the useless paper currency into an ornamental papering for the rooms of his house. At all events the proposition to which he alluded was to relieve the distress of the country by the issue of a valueless medium. Now was such the course which the hon. member for Whitehaven meant to recommend? As well as he had been able to comprehend his intention, he thought it was so. Supposing it to be so, he was anxious then to ascertain what the meditated paper currency was to be, in what shape it was to appear, and to what extent its issue was to be carried. As to the real value of such a medium he could form but one opinion, namely, that paper currency framed on another principle than that of a mere promise to pay on demand was, when viewed in regard to security, utterly and entirely valueless, the circulation of which only depended on the individual prosperity of the parties who threw it out on the market. What, he asked, would be the inevitable result of such a state of things? Confusion and insecurity. It might perhaps, be asked what had been the result of the issue of paper currency during the last war? Unquestionably in that case the result had been prosperous; but let the House for a moment consider how every circumstance combined to effect prosperity. In the first place England then enjoyed the trade of the whole world, while she was making rapid advances in manufacturing industry. and skill. She likewise possessed the monopoly of the seas, the whole world being in fact under her blockade. And, in addition to these circumstances, 20,000,000*l*., 30,000,000*l*., and in one year he believed 45,000,000*l*., were borrowed on public credit, and spent profusely through the country. By that means a great temporary prosperity was unquestionably attained which gave a momentary vigour to the prosperity of the people, but subsequently left them more enfeebled and more distressed than ever. Supposing three or four of the gentry of a county, each possessing 10,000*l.* a-year, were to mortgage their properties, and spend the whole proceeds in one year, they would unquestionably produce great temporary prosperity in that district; but the result would be that at the expiration of the year, having spent their means, they would have recourse to the workhouse, accompanied by the consolatory feeling that they had so impaired the moral tone of those whom they sought to benefit as to have left them in a far more distressed condition than when they set out. Such had exactly been the case with Great Britain. In one or two years the resources of several had been squandered lavishly, and the moral tone of the people destroyed; and although the country was not in the workhouse, a degradation from which it was only saved by the fact of there being no workhouse large enough to hold it, yet it was in a situation quite as bad. It was easy enough to contract a debt, and procure a temporary state of prosperity by its means; but the "*revocare gradum*" generally caused infinitely more distress and misery than the temporary prosperity of a few years could compensate. His sincere opinion was, that for the last year or two the country had been taking a turn upwards in regard to prosperity. In the year 1810, when the late Mr. Horner produced his report on the bullion question, he concurred in every sentiment which it contained except the last—namely, that in the midst of the war, when our expenditure was annually 40,000,000*l.* and upwards, when we were running on, as the sailors would say, with all our flying kites aloft—we ought to come within two years to a metallic circulation. It appeared strange to him that a conclusion so preposterous should have ever come into the heads of two such able men as Mr. Horner and Mr. Huskisson. He agreed with them in all their principles, but he differed from them in the conclusion to be drawn from those principles, and by so doing had rendered himself liable to the taunt which had often been cast upon him since, that he had argued one way and had voted another. He had equally voted against the famous resolution proposed by Mr. Vansittart, as Chancellor of the Exchequer. That resolution had met with general condemnation, even from unreformed Parliaments; but he had heard last night, in a Reformed Parliament, from so great an authority as the hon. member for London, some things which were well calculated to support that resolution. The argument used by that hon. Member rested upon this false basis, that the alteration of the value of money had nothing to do with the variation of prices. Now, if that were so, beyond all question the resolution of Mr. Vansittart was well founded. He contended, however, that it was not so; and in support of his argument referred to a speech delivered by Mr. Henry Thornton, in the year 1811, upon receiving the report of the bullion committee. He recommended that speech to the attention of the hon. member for London, and also of the right hon. Vice-President of the Board of Trade, who had rested a little too much upon Mr. Mushet's statements respecting the appreciation and depreciation of money during the war. Mr. Henry Thornton, who was a cautious practical man, declared that in his opinion it was impossible to calculate exactly the fall of money in 1811. "It was material," said he, "to observe that there had since the beginning of the war been a continual fall in the value of money—he meant of money commonly so called, whether consisting of cash or paper. This had been estimated by some at sixty or seventy per cent, and certainly was not less than forty or fifty per cent." Now, though there was a long passage in Mr. Henry Thornton's speech showing how this gave a stimulus to the prosperity of the country, by the great advantage which it held out to borrowers, he would not read it at present, being quite content to have placed before the House the opinion of such a man upon the impossibility of calculating exactly the depreciation of money during the continuance of the war. It would be recollected, however, that Mr. Thornton, who was accustomed as a practical man to feel his way cautiously in the world of business, declared that that fall could not be less than forty per cent. A contrary opinion, however, prevailed, and the Legislature acted upon it. They saw nothing but the difference between the value of gold and that of paper. He undoubtedly admitted, that under such circumstances, it was a grave undertaking in 1819 to come back to payments in gold; and opposed as he was to the proposition of his hon. friend the member for Whitehaven, to revert back to paper, he admitted as readily that the main difficulties of the country had arisen from the struggles which it had then, so much to its honour, though not perhaps so much to its opulence, thought proper to make. He stated on that occasion that he thought the philosophers were wrong; but when they came to the question of a great depreciation, he was ready to avow that he shrunk back. They now had experience from what had since passed. It was impossible to say what the extent of the depreciation was; but he would relate a fact illustrative of the point. When he was at Paris the emperor of Russia then stood in our present situation with respect to his paper currency, or in point of degree, he was in a worse situation. His paper was depreciated in the ratio of four to one. Four Gentlemen were appointed to meet, and the case was proposed to them. He was one of the four, and Mr. Gallatin was another. It was their unanimous opinion that greater injustice would be done by endeavouring to return to a standard than by continuing the circulation of the depreciated paper currency, and they recommended that the depreciation should be allowed to stand as it then stood. So far from this being a justification of the proposal of his hon. friend it ought rather to operate as a warning to him. What injustice what misery, what ruin to individuals ensued the moment a Government departed from a sound principle of currency.

> What a tangled web we weave
> When first we practise to deceive.

It was now merely for Gentlemen to consider whether they had heard enough from the hon. member for Whitehaven, and from his hon. relative, to say if they would trust themselves with such pilots on a sea so stormy. Putting aside the integrity of the measure, he would say to those who administered the affairs of a great country, that all tricks in finance, such as tampering with the currency, never could answer any end; and the moment they abandoned principle, they were led into a maze of which they never could see the conclusion. But taking a more narrow view of the subject, he would call the attention of the country gentlemen to the consideration of how it would affect their interests, for he knew that the topic was popular with country gentlemen, and he had received several letters from his constituents recommending that the standard should be lowered. A sort of mystery was supposed by country gentlemen to hang about the question, and many shook their heads, and were heard to say that all the evils of the country were connected with the state of the currency, and in saying this they thought that they had uttered something very wise. Now, how, he begged leave to ask, would the proposed measure operate on the country gentlemen? The protection of the interests of the country gentlemen was supposed to rest upon their monopoly by the exclusion of foreign corn from the home market of consumption. If the country gentlemen would support a proposition which would bring the value of the 1*l.* down to 10*s.*, they would thereby bring their protecting corn duty down from 60*s.* to 30*s.* If the Corn-laws turned on the pivot of 60*s.*, which he believed they did, the moment they depreciated the standard, they would depreciate in precisely the same proportion the protecting duty, for people abroad would not care for our depreciation; and if 60*s.* in England were reduced to the value of only 30*s.*, foreigners would act upon that fact. The country gentlemen might then come to Parliament and wish the 60*s.* to be made 120*s.*, and then they would have nothing to fear; but they would have to fight with the hon. members for Wolverhampton and other towns who were not the sort of antagonists whom country gentlemen liked to encounter on that subject. The whole turned on the currency, and their 10*l.* would, in fact, become 5*l.* at once. When the Currency-laws were under the consideration of the House he had made the same observation; and when the Reform Bill was brought forward he had said the same thing. He had pointed out the fluctuating nature of the value of money, and had said that of all bases the most absurd was that of resting the representation of a country on the value of its currency. Nothing could be more unstatesman-like than to build the constitution of a country on the fluctuating value of money. Ministers would not do this with respect to tithes. No, they were not allowed to depend on the value of money; they must be made to change with a corn rate; and yet when they were building a constitution, they never thought of this. Those Reformers who thought that 10*l.* was too small a qualification, and those who thought that 60*s.* were too low a corn duty, he would advise to consider what would be the effect of acceding to the present Motion. He would now state to what extent he should be inclined to go if a measure had been brought forward by any sober—if any measure had been brought forward of a more sober description, and which would excite no doubt or uncertainty in the country. In such a case he should have been willing to go into a Committee, to see if some regulations of the currency could not be established, so as to give greater facilities to the general business. The positive lowering of the currency to the indefinite extent of the proposal of the hon. Member, was what he for one would demur to. He would now state to what extent he thought the alteration of the present system might be carried. The alteration he should wish to see made, according to his views, if the House granted a Committee, would be with respect to making the notes of the Bank of England a legal tender in the country. He did not know what the noble Lord's intentions were with respect to the alterations to be made in the Bank Charter. The distress of the Bank of England might arise from a call for money, either to carry gold out of the country or to guard against any internal panic. Although a panic might have nothing political in its nature, like that of 1825, it would still be fatal to the credit of the Bank. The drafts, on the other hand, made merely to balance foreign exchanges, the Bank, if it conducted itself well, would always be able to meet. The country felt safe on this subject, and the Bank must very ill conduct its affairs indeed, if one or two millions did not enable it to meet any thing of this sort. The other case was of a more serious nature, and it could not be better exemplified than by a short statement of how it operated in 1825. In that year the distress was general, and the Bank was drained of its gold, not for the purpose of sending it abroad, for it was actually coming in from abroad at that time; but everybody wished to be paid in that metal; and a country banker, a banker of Norwich, told him at that period that he could not sleep quiet at night in his bed, unless he had obtained a sovereign for every one-pound note he had in the house. Such was the extent of the panic, that the Bank was completely drained of its specie. The Bank was within an ace of stopping payment, and it had been saved by no virtue of its own, but by means of paying out its half-sovereigns and one-pound notes. Against an operation of this sort no prudence on the part of the Bank could guard. He would defy the Bank to be perfectly secure on this point, let it conduct its affairs however cautiously and with whatever prudence, unless it carried on its transactions in that cramped manner which would be injurious to the circulation of the country. Those who took gold for Bank of England notes, would have slept quietly in their beds if they could have offered bank-notes for gold to those who held their paper. If Bank of England notes, therefore, were made a legal tender, it would greatly relieve the country, and it would leave the Bank of England only exposed to the influence of foreign markets, and the Bank would not then be constantly cramping the circulation of the country. His second object in the Committee would relate to the silver standard. When they had before returned to cash payments he had given his opinion on the subject. The philosophers had said—[*Mr. M. Attwood laughed.*]—The hon. member for Whitehaven would not suppose that he had called him a philosopher—but the philosophers had said, that his theory was not sound. Now he would maintain that two metals, gold and silver, were liable to fewer variations, and that money, having its foundation in two precious metals, was less liable to vary in relation to commodities than money having its standard fixed in one metal; and the agio between gold and silver, which so much disturbed the imaginations of the philosophers, was nothing of any consequence compared to the inconvenience of confining the Bank to one metal, and which was not the metal of general circulation. This was a subject worthy of the most serious inquiry. Mr. Gallatin was desirous that the same circulation should be common to all countries which were connected by commerce, and no man of enlarged views and practically acquainted with commerce could doubt the soundness of the opinion. At no distant time this point must be submitted to an inquiry. The silver standard was established in Holland, France, and in other parts of the world; and he hardly knew a country where silver was not the practical standard, but where gold was not the tender. Some Gentlemen said that silver would drive out gold; but gold, on the contrary, might drive out silver, and there was no reason why they might not circulate together. This was the case in Holland. In the small kingdom of the Netherlands the gold in circulation amounted to ten millions, whilst the silver was four millions and a half. He believed it was rather cheaper to pay in gold than in silver. In France the premium was about one-tenth or one-eighth per cent for gold, and this had been increased in consequence of the demand in England for gold. This would cease if England were to adopt a silver standard. He knew that the philosophers had been against him on that subject, and, what was worse, he had had all the Bank of England against him. Mr. Huskisson had got him before the Privy Council upon the subject after the gentlemen of the Bank of England had been examined on it, and he had said that what he (Mr. Baring) had spoken was all nonsense; but he (Mr. Baring) had now the satisfaction of knowing that all those gentlemen who had opposed him had altered their opinion, and that the gentleman who was lately at the head of the Bank, and who, perhaps, was the most able man that had ever been at the head of any bank (he meant Mr. Horsley Palmer), had given his opinion in favour of a silver standard. One important advantage of a silver currency would be a conformity to the rest of the world. He wished that England would get into an exact conformity with France, and other countries would follow the example of two such nations, to the great benefit of all countries. He wished to see this and similar questions cordially embraced by the two nations, instead of keeping up the old jealousies and bickerings between them. The question now before the House was, whether it would depart from the present standard; but his proposal was, not to alter the standard of value, but to put it on two legs instead of one. If the public excitement on the deeper question then before them could be got rid of—and that excitement might be done away with by the vote of that night—then would it be safe to look to the two points he mentioned, and see whether or not a material facility might be given to the circulating medium of the country. When those two points were settled, he should not object to inquire whether from their operation it would not be safe to come to an issue of one-pound notes. He did not mean to pledge himself to an issue of one-pound notes, but he saw no reason why, under the additional securities he pointed out, it might not be resorted to. Should those securities become sufficient, he thought, and it had always been his opinion, that a one-pound note circulation was most useful in facilitating business. There were, to be sure, two objections to it. He meant the increased temptation to forgery, and the uncertainty of those poor people who had small sums in the country banks. However, he contended that, in many places, a small circulation would be most useful, particularly among farmers, and in small towns in agricultural districts. It was not correct to state that manufacturers were much distressed, but it was true that great distress prevailed among the agriculturists—that farmers' capitals were much reduced. In small agricultural towns the distress sometimes proceeded from a want of a small circulation, to enable the farmer to transact business with greater facility with the small tradesmen of country towns. That a more extended circulating medium would do them good was not only his opinion, but it was also that of his constituents. After these statements, it might be plausibly asked of him why he objected to go into the present Committee of Inquiry now asked for? His reason was, that he objected to go into such a Committee with a man who clearly wanted a complete subversion of the standard of value of the country. That hon. Member had drawn up Resolutions in the way of all those who intend to catch flies draw up Resolutions, for he could turn round if they were not agreed to, and say, "What! you won't go into an inquiry about the distress of the country?" It was impossible for him to go into an inquiry on the present subject with the hon. Member, for he could not separate his avowed opinions from any measures he proposed, no matter how they were coloured or concealed. He might as well go into an inquiry about the distress of Ireland with the hon. and learned member for Dublin, who would state, and no doubt from conviction, that the union of the two countries was the cause of that distress, and that separation was the only remedy. Or he might as well go into a Committee of Inquiry on the distress of the country with that great philosopher, Mr. Owen, always supposing that one of the fruits of Reform was the return of that philosopher to that House, who, of course, would make, on the subject of that general distress, a flaming speech on the community of goods, wives, and every thing else; and who would attribute the distress to something wrong in the social system.—From these remarks it would be readily seen that he could not consent to the Motion of the hon. member for Whitehaven, and he hoped that the House would give a distinct and positive opinion on the subject, so as to calm the fears and alleviate the evils which agitating it had so extensively produced.

Sir *Robert Peel:* Although, Sir, I believe that I shall agree with my hon. friend (Mr. Baring) in the practical conclusion to which I shall come, and the vote I shall give on the present question, yet he propounded, in the course of his speech, some doctrines which excite in my mind so much doubt and apprehension, that I feel no scruple as to the propriety of immediately following him in the course of debate. I must begin by observing, that as my hon. friend is prepared to maintain the opinions expressed in the concluding part of his speech, it would have been but just and becoming in him to have abstained from those terms of contemptuous severity applied in the commencement of that speech to those with whom the present Motion originated. My hon. friend, although prepared rigidly to adhere to the metallic standard, is yet willing to admit of, nay to advise, an inquiry into three very important alterations in the established monetary system: first, the union of silver with gold as a joint standard of value; secondly, permission to every country banker to offer as a legal tender, Bank of England notes in exchange for his own promissory notes; and thirdly, to sanction the re-issue of 1*l.* and 2*l.* notes. If my hon. friend be really prepared to grant a Committee of Inquiry into the policy of three such important and extensive alterations as these, he surely must foresee that his own course will, in great measure, cause that state of suspense—will raise all those doubts in commercial dealings, which, in the first part of his speech, he urged as a main obstacle and impediment in the way of his assenting to the Motion of the hon. member for Whitehaven. The re-issue of 1*l.* and 2*l.* notes! Why, Sir, I never felt confidence in predicting the result of any political measure, greater than that which I feel in predicting what must be the consequence of permitting the re-issue of 1*l.* and 2*l.* notes. That consequence will inevitably be, the disappearance of the gold currency from circulation. I do not rely on mere reasoning for the proof of this, but I refer to the example of every country in which small notes have been allowed to circulate. In Scotland you have 1*l.* and 2*l.* notes; such notes being nominally, and indeed practically, when tendered by the holders, convertible into coin; but it is, nevertheless, true that they have, in point of fact, excluded from circulation the whole of the metallic currency. In Ireland you have also 1*l.* and 2*l.* notes, and the same consequence has followed. In America there are, or at least there were permitted, notes of still smaller value, and the result has been the same not only with respect to gold coin, but to silver also. The currency of the cheaper, has banished that of the more precious, material. So it will be in England. By permitting the issue of small notes, you will afford a direct premium to the country banker to discourage, as far as possible, the circulation of coin in his neighbourhood. No one can deny that whilst the small notes maintain their credit, they are a cheaper instrument of circulation, and one not less efficacious than gold; and that it would be a positive pecuniary advantage to the country to get rid of the gold currency altogether, if you could ensure entire and permanent confidence in paper and the fixed value of it, after the exclusion of gold. But I contend that there is no security in an immense mass of paper circulation, professedly convertible into gold—but not resting for its basis upon a metallic circulation. You think you can take effectual precautions against panics, commercial or political, by insisting on security from the issuers of paper. There can, in truth, be no effectual security against such panics and their disastrous effects. The best security is the presence of a metallic currency equally diffused throughout the country. But take what precautions you please to ensure the solvency of country banks—compel them, if you will, to deposit Exchequer-bills or funded property, or to assign land as a security for their issues,—I assert, you do positively nothing by these precautions to control the excessive issue of paper, or to ensure the competency of these banks in the time of pressure and alarm, to fulfil their engagements; which engagements are, expressly—to pay a definite weight of gold in exchange for their promissory notes. You consider the banks safe, and the holders of bank-notes secure, provided the notes are issued on the security and deposit of real capital. Why, this reasoning would prove that the whole landed and funded property of the country might be converted into circulating medium, and that there would be no danger of excess in the issue, however extravagant, so long as there was a corresponding deposit of property. Now, in my opinion, such a deposit may be the guarantee of the ultimate solvency of a particular bank, in a sound state of the currency, but it is no guarantee whatever that that bank will be able to pay its notes in gold on demand, after gold shall have been banished from circulation. Depend upon it, the time will shortly come when the demand will be made; and if made and refused, what is this but inability to meet engagements, and fulfil positive contracts? I admit, that by the re-issue of small notes, you may give a stimulus, a fictitious stimulus, to trade;—all may go on well for several months; gold, being no longer indispensable for domestic circulation, will flow out of the country for the purpose of effecting foreign payments—the importation of foreign articles will, for a time, be promoted, the export of the gold will at first counteract the tendency to an unfavourable exchange, or at least diminish the indications of it; and you will, in short, have every symptom of increasing prosperity; but in the course of eighteen months or two years, the currency will become excessive, the exchanges will rapidly fall; there will be a demand upon the bank for gold;—the bank will take the alarm, will refuse accommodation, and contract its issues:—the demand for gold will extend to all the issuers of paper, then will come the rapid and simultaneous sale of public securities, and the renewal of that panic and all its consequences, of which you had the disastrous experience in the winter of 1825. The bank may remain solvent in one sense, that is, may have means beyond its liabilities; but it will be unable to meet its obligations to impatient creditors, who demand instant payment in gold. What must be the result? Actual failure, or a restriction imposed by authority.

With respect to my hon. friend's proposition for a joint gold and silver standard, it has been already submitted to this House, and has been negatived, among other reasons, because its direct tendency, and, indeed, avowed object, was to lower the standard of value.

Mr. *Baring:* One word in explanation. I have always contended, that, on the adoption of a gold and silver standard, it must be so regulated as not to lower the general value of the pound sterling.

Sir *Robert Peel:* Then my hon. friend must take the present market-price of silver, and not the old Mint price, for the standard. The market-price of silver is now, I believe, 4*s.* 11*d.* per ounce; the Mint price of silver, when silver was a legal tender, was 5*s.* 2*d.* per ounce. If my hon. friend should take the Mint price of silver for the standard of value, he would depreciate the present standard; if he should take the market-price, he will not adhere to the ancient standard. That the same great principles which apply to gold as a standard of value, in respect to its controlling excessive issues, and regulating the value of paper, apply equally to silver, or to a joint standard of gold and silver, I do not deny; but there are many considerations, such, for instance, as whether silver ever was, practically, the standard of value, in this country, after the gold currency was reformed; whether you can maintain, in the same country, two metals constantly varying in their relative value, as a standard; whether it would be desirable to maintain them if you could; these are considerations which would require very serious inquiry, but into which I will not now enter.

The third suggestion of my hon. friend is, that every country banker shall, hereafter, be allowed to offer Bank of England notes in exchange for his own notes, when presented for payment. But it is impossible to stop there. If a Bank of England note is to be a legal tender, on the part of a country banker, so must it be on the part of every other man in the country. Will my hon. friend say, that his proposition is to be limited to country bankers? That the issuers of paper shall have the special exclusive privilege of discharging their debts in other paper? That a customer who has deposited gold with a country banker, and who asks to have that gold returned, may receive for answer—"We have no gold for you, but here is a Bank of England note;" while that same customer shall remain under the obligation of discharging all his own debts and incumbrances in standard gold? But, suppose the customer shall draw a draft upon the country banker for 4*l.* 10*s.*, or wanting 100 sovereigns, shall draw on successive days twenty drafts for sums below 5*l.*, how are these drafts to be paid, except in gold, unless, indeed, my hon. friend's other plan of issuing 1*l.* notes shall have been already adopted? It is clear that the issue of notes below 5*l.* must be the concomitant of a plan which would make Bank of England paper a legal tender, and would relieve the country banker from the liability to payments in cash. But these are great changes to make in our monetary system; so great and important, indeed, that I must again say, that if a Committee were granted to consider them, there would arise all that agitation and suspense in pecuniary dealings, which my hon. friend is the first to deprecate, and which, as he justly says, would, in the present artificial state of society, and the peculiar condition of the commercial classes, aggravate every evil under which we are now said to be suffering.

The House, Sir, will probably expect from me, or at least will not be surprised, that, I should wish to state my views upon the principal points which are the immediate subject of debate. Such references have been made to the part I personally took, in 1819, in establishing the present system of our currency; the importance of the subject is so great; the interest I feel in it on every ground, public and private, is so overwhelming; that, wearied as the House must be by a debate, dull and tedious from the abstruse and abstract nature of its subject, I yet hope from its indulgence a patient hearing. No doubt the most important part of the question is, the practical one—namely, the consideration of what can be done in the present condition of society for the purpose of relieving the distress alleged to exist; but still I cannot permit to pass without remark, the references which have been made to the Act of 1819. I might pass by those references if personal feelings were alone concerned. I might submit, in silence, to the imputations of rashness and folly, if the consequence was mere injustice to the authors of the measure; but I well know that such injustice is not the single consequence; that if without contradiction you can stigmatize the Act of 1819, as an Act of confiscation—if you may take for granted that though possibly well intended, it was, in fact, founded on injustice and injury—I well know that you cannot do this without undermining the foundations of the whole monetary system, and preparing for its total subversion. To avert such an evil, I am prepared to deny the justice of the aspersions cast upon the measure of 1819. Gentlemen who have taken part in this debate speak of the promoters of that Act as if they were repentant sinners, as if they acknowledged the evil which they had done, and, made wise by experience, bitterly lamented the consequences of their folly. I scorn those vile imputations of base, interested motives which have been thrown out in other places. I know that they will not influence the judgment of this House. I have heard none of them within these walls. I would to God that I had; and that those men who are bold enough, when they have no one present to confute them—who are not sparing of their calumnies and menaces when they are addressing inflammable assemblies of the people—would here, face to face, in presence of the accused redeem their pledges, and repeat their accusations.

An hon. Gentleman, the member for Knaresborough, with intentions, at least, for which I return him my sincere thanks, has been kind enough to throw his protecting shield over me. He said, "the Bill of 1819 was not Mr. Peel's Bill. Oh, no! he was an ingenuous young man, ignorant of the subject of currency, performing a task thrown upon him by the Ministers, and all the blame belongs to Lord Liverpool." Sir, I will not allow the blame, if there be blame, to be transferred to any one, still less to one who is no more. I was not, in 1819, connected with the Government. I had quitted office, and had no desire to return to it; but I was the Chairman of the Committee of Inquiry, and I brought in the Act of 1819 in consequence of a conviction, founded on positive demonstration, that there could be no standard of value except a definite weight of the precious metals, and that a paper circulation, inconvertible, or resting on anything but a metallic basis, must be liable to injurious fluctuations both in amount and value, and exposed to the constant hazard of discredit. In 1819, the question came before the House for final decision. In my opinion, that question was, the choice between two alternatives—eternal Bank restriction, or the return to cash payments without further delay. Gentlemen now speak, as if no evils had been suffered before 1819. They assume that the Act of 1819 was brought in without experience of past embarrassment, without the pressure of any actual evil, without any expectation or demand on the part of the public; and the hon. member for Knaresborough is simple enough to think, that the House of Commons was, on a sudden, deluded by a speech which the hon. Gentleman himself heard, and which he describes as void of all matter—of all reasoning—but which very strongly reminded him of the harp of Orpheus. The harp of Orpheus! Does the hon. Gentleman really think that Orpheus would have chosen, for the subject of his lyre, the Bullion Report? or that having chosen it, and having poured forth a melody with soft tones, but "without matter" or the "shadow of an argument," he would have been able to cajole the simple understandings of city merchants, and to soften the flinty hearts of Bank Directors;

> Mulcentemque Tigres, et agentem carmine quercus.

What a notion, that the House of Commons was taken by surprise on the currency question in the year 1819! that the restoration of the metallic standard was heard of, for the first time, in 1819! Why, the Bullion Report had been made in 1810—that is, nine years before, and had provoked a pamphlet from almost every man that could write. When Mr. Horner proposed, in 1811, among other resolutions, that cash payments should be resumed within two years of that date, that resolution was negatived, and other resolutions proposed by Mr. Vansittart were adopted. But did these latter resolutions sanction the doctrine, that cash payments must never be resumed? Did they intimate that the public creditor must be repaid in depreciated currency? No such thing. Among these resolutions of Mr. Vansittart, was one, expressly recording it as the opinion of the House, that it was expedient that, at the earliest period compatible with the public safety, the Bank should resume its payments in coin at the ancient standard of value. Peace arrived in 1814; and what course did Parliament pursue? It distinctly recognised the justice of resuming cash payments. It recognised the claim of the public creditor to repayment in coin, and limited the further restriction on the Bank to one year. In 1815, war again broke out, and the battle of Waterloo was fought. The restriction was continued; but was again limited to one year. The year 1816 came, and it was found necessary to continue the restriction for a further period of two years; but in the preamble of the continuing Bill, there was admitted, by universal consent, a distinct recognition that the Bank ought to prepare for the immediate resumption of cash payments; 1818 arrived, and there was again an almost unanimous expression of opinion in Parliament, that the time had arrived when the ancient standard must be restored, no one then doubting the claims of the public creditor, in point of justice, or denying the general policy of returning to cash payments. Another postponement, however, took place, limited to a year; but, in 1819, the House became weary of these continued delays, and a Committee was appointed, mainly on the suggestion, and at the instance of Mr. Tierney, to inquire into the whole subject, and the best mode of insuring the resumption of cash payments. As I have already said, I was not in office, but I was selected as Chairman of that Committee, and I presented its report to the House. The substance of it was, that at the end of four years from its date, cash payments, according to the ancient standard, must be resumed; but that the resumption should be effected by gradual steps, assuming the actual market-price of gold, at the time, as the preparatory and provisional standard. I ask the House this question—if cash payments were ever to be resumed, had not the time then arrived? Four years had elapsed since the peace, when the inquiry was commenced; and if we had then deferred the actual resumption to a later period than 1823—that is, for more than eight years after the conclusion of peace—do you think it ever would have taken place at all? that the Bank, or the public would have believed that we were in earnest? I greatly doubt whether the old doctrines about paper and gold are not still maintained—whether there are not many of those whom I am now addressing, who dream of inconvertible paper, or of some other foundation for paper currency, than a metallic basis. [*No, no!*] I rejoice to hear the denial; but this I know, that many of the arguments urged by those who vote for the Committee, apply with as much force to the adoption of any determinate, unvarying metallic standard, as to the ancient standard.

I have now done with the assertion, that the House was taken by surprise by the Act of 1819. I approach another assertion—that although, in 1819, it might be fit to prepare for cash payments, yet that another standard of value should have been adopted, and that the ounce of gold should have been coined into 5*l.*, or 6*l.*, or some other sum, instead of 3*l.* 17*s.* 10*d.* That is easy wisdom—even if in this case it be wisdom—which is acquired after the event. It is very well to say now—that the ancient standard should not have been resumed—that after all the promises made during the war—after the unanimous expressions of opinion, repeated, time after time, in favour of the resumption of cash payments at the ancient standard—another, and a lower standard should have been taken; but I should like to ask any impartial man, who remembers the state of public feeling and public opinion in 1819, what would have been the fate of a proposition, in that year, to enable the Bank to dicharge its promissory notes at the rate of 15*s.* in the pound! What! with the feeling on the subject of forgery of notes—with the impression that the Bank had amassed great gains by means of the Bank restriction—that the nominal rise, in the price of gold, was owing to excessive and most profitable issues of paper, do you think that Parliament would have tolerated — would have listened for one moment to—the proposal, that the issuers of the Bank of England paper, and of all other paper, should compound with their creditors, by debasing the standard? Who was the Minister that could have reconciled Parliament, or the people of this country, to such a proposal? Why, the Bank itself never denied its own liability to pay its notes, at some time or other, in gold, at the ancient standard. Nay, the Bank did actually, of its own accord—without any compulsion on the part of Parliament—after the peace, but before this fatal year, 1819, issue above 7,000,000 of gold sovereigns in exchange for its promissory notes. A foolish issue I admit; but an issue, demonstrating the opinion of the Bank, as to the nature of its own obligations, and yet, in 1819, we were—against the opinions, and conviction, and practice of the Bank itself—to enable the Bank to pay with 15*s.* a debt of 20*s.*!

If the Act of 1819 was so clearly unjust—so manifestly impolitic—how came it, that of all those who now take credit for their wisdom and foresight—not one man was found, in either House of Parliament, bold enough or honest enough to take the sense of either House against the Bill, or against any one of its enactments? The member for Coventry did, indeed, bring forward Resolutions opposed, not to the principles of mine, but to some of the details; but he found the sense of the House so adverse to him, that he withdrew his resolutions; and those moved by me, as the foundation of the Bill, passed through the House of Commons, as it stands recorded in the *Parliamentary Debates* without one dissentient voice. Is it decent, then, in the men who were then present, to impute all the subsequent distress of the country to the rashness and haste of the measure of 1819—and to me, as the author of it—when they who now claim credit for having so clearly foreseen the difficulties in which it would involve us, never came forward to oppose its principles, or even delay its progress? But I have understated the case. There were two amendments proposed to the measure—one in this House, and one in the House of Lords. That proposed to this House affirmed that there ought to be no intermediate steps of resumption, and that cash payments at the ancient standard should be resumed in 1822, instead of 1823; actually a year earlier than I myself proposed. That was the only Amendment proposed in this House, and pressed to a division. The Amendment proposed in the other House of Parliament was by Lord Holland, who, for the purpose of recording his opinion, moved that cash payments be resumed in 1820, instead of 1823. Have I not, then, a right to say, (if I wanted to shrink from any personal responsibility, which I do not), since the only complaint put on record by any Member was, that the resumption was too gradual, and too remote,—have I not a right to say, that Parliament is peculiarly and specially responsible for the Act of 1819?

I approach the last, and the most important consideration connected with the measure of 1819: namely, this—Is the distress of the country fairly attributable in the whole, or in any important degree, to that measure? I think I have shown, first, that Parliament was not taken by surprise;—secondly, that the measure was not the measure of an individual, or of a party, or of a government; but was the measure of the Parliament, speaking the voice, and representing the deliberate judgment of the country. Still, these considerations are not to fetter us from reviewing the measure, if it have been the cause of public evil, and if that evil be now reparable; but both these hypotheses must be proved. Now, I begin by admitting that there has been great depression of price, great occasional distress—from some cause or other—since the peace. Nay, more, I will admit that some distress was the inevitable consequence of the measure of resumption. Resumption implied the termination of that state of ease, which, no doubt, in one sense, accompanied inconvertible paper—it ensured also, inevitably, some increase in the value of the currency of the country, and *pro tanto* affected the then existing engagements. But to attribute the whole depression of prices, and the whole distress consequent on that depression to the change in the currency is a fallacy, as gross as any that ever was imposed upon the understandings of men. You may contend, that Mr. Ricardo was wrong in estimating the whole change in the value of the currency at three or four per cent; but his error (if it was an error) was nothing to yours, who attribute the whole alteration in prices to the change in the currency. I have admitted—and repeat—that it was impossible for us to return from a system of inconvertible paper currency to a system where gold or silver was the standard, without a sense of pressure and restraint. It was impossible, after having so long indulged in stimulants, that we could return to a course of temperance and sobriety without feeling depression. But what lesson is it that we are taught by the past? Again to depreciate the currency? [*No!*] "These things are written for your learning." The sufferings that you now undergo are the certain consequences of the original departure from right principles. They cannot be alleviated: they will only be aggravated, by abandoning those principles now. They ought to warn you, that having restored a metallic standard, you ought to adhere to it, and not again to enter upon a course, the return from which is no doubt attended with pressure and difficulty, but with no evil comparable to that of the indefinite continuance of an inconvertible paper currency.

No doubt there has been a great depression of prices; but this, I say, that if any man hopes, by any system of currency, to bolster up prices to those of the war, he is miserably mistaken. Look at the duration and character of that war, commencing in 1793, and lasting till 1815. During this period of twenty-two years you had an inconvertible paper-currency—you monopolised the whole supply of Europe with manufactured articles—you were the only country in Europe not subject to hostile invasion—and you had the command of the seas. Do you think such a state of things could cease, and perfect tranquillity be restored to the whole world—and that you could yet maintain the prices of the war?

My hon. friend quotes Mr. Thornton as having admitted that prices had been raised during the war, forty or fifty per cent; but Mr. Thornton was then speaking of the years 1810 and 1811, when the war was raging, and when all the other causes of high price were in full vigour. Now, in 1819, four years after the peace, many of these causes had ceased to operate; prices had already come down; and our bloated and turgid prosperity had collapsed with the return to peace, and the cessation of war monopoly and war stimulants. We hear the distress since 1819 described in terms as if distress was unknown at previous periods—as if there could be no cause of distress but the resumption of cash payments. In the year 1793, was there no distress? Did not 100 bankers fail? Was there none in 1797? Was there no distress in 1810, when you had an inconvertible paper-currency, and with little prospect of the return to a metallic standard? In that year a Committee was appointed for the express purpose of administering relief to the commercial community. It was in evidence before that Committee that prices had fallen fifty, sixty, and seventy per cent. Wherefore was this—if the doctrine be true that inconvertible paper, or enlarged issues of paper, will be a security against commercial failure and general pecuniary embarrassment? You had an inconvertible paper-currency in the years 1816 and 1817—you had no contraction of paper by the Bank of England in those years, as compared with the average of former years—quite the reverse; and yet, many country bankers failed, and involved large masses of the community in misery. The proof is quite conclusive, that the enhancement of the currency must be dated from a much earlier period than from the year 1819. I could prove this from the distinct admissions of those who now ask for this Committee, which, if it is to have any practical result at all, must lead to a depreciation of the currency. What will be the effect of that depreciation? Why, that every man who has entered into contracts (not merely during the last four or five, but, as I shall show, during the last eighteen years) will have them disturbed in the most unexpected and unjust manner. If, indeed, you could take from the public creditor, who lent money in the depreciated currency of the war, and who has received payment in the appreciated currency of the peace, the difference between the sums paid and received (though you would commit, in my opinion, a most dishonest act), there would be, at any rate, an intelligible pretext for the proceeding. But the effect of depreciating the currency now, will have no such operation, but it will disturb all unfulfilled contracts which have been made in the improved currency—being ninety-nine out of every 100 of the total number. These contracts, as I before said, are not limited to recent years; do not date merely from 1823, when the Bill of 1819 came into full operation; but extend over, at least, the whole period that has elapsed since the peace. To prove this, I put into the witness-box the hon. member for Birmingham. He will confirm my statement, that the enhancement of the currency began many years before 1819. On the 2nd of May, 1817, he wrote a letter to Mr. Vansittart, describing the state of the country in respect to its monetary system in connexion with trade and industry. This was two years before 1819, and six years before the Act which passed in that year came into full operation. At that time there was no lack of paper; and that paper was inconvertible. Notes below 5*l.* were issued by all banks, without restriction. Yet you will see that neither abundance of paper, nor inconvertible paper, nor 1*l.* and 2*l.* notes were any securities against pecuniary embarrassment and general distress. But the special object for which I refer to this letter is, to show, on authority (for this purpose indisputable), that the alterations in the value of money had actually taken place long before 1819; and that the contracts, since 1815, have been in an enhanced currency. The hon. Member, in this letter of 1817, remarks, "Money has doubled in value in the last five years." He says, again—

'A scarcity of money has existed for five 'years, which caused prices to fall.'

Now, as to distress:—

'There are 40,000 manufacturers of nails 'in this neighbourhood. The articles 'which they manufacture are not articles 'for the consumption of war, and yet thou'sands of these men are perishing with 'hunger. Sir, I speak literally, and not 'figuratively—thousands of these men are 'perishing with hunger, or are dying by 'inches from the effects of unwholesome 'and unusual food.'

As to land and the agricultural interest:—

'The landlords have received no rent for 'the last four years. If they have received 'any income from their land, it has been 'drawn from the capital of the farmer, or 'from the impoverishment of their land, or, 'at least, from the amount of the principal 'of their land, which is fallen one-half in 'monied value; and, consequently, the 'landlord who converted his property into 'money a few years ago, has thereby posi'tively doubled his real capital.'

Let us now hear the situation of the monied man in 1817:—

'Observe the situation of the capitalist 'for the last three or four years. It has 'been quite impossible for him to improve 'his circumstances by any kind of industry. 'The depression of prices has mocked his 'labours and mortified his hopes. Let him 'have produced whatever he will, it is 'quite certain that the product of his in'dustry has not repaid him the money 'which it cost him. If an invading army 'could have succeeded in breaking up the 'whole of the high roads throughout the 'kingdom, the consequences would have 'been exactly similar to those which we 'have already experienced, until such roads 'were restored. 'The products of industry could no 'longer have been exchanged for each other, 'and the natives of every district and of 'every village would have been left to 'perish in the midst of plenty. This has 'been the situation of England, in a very 'great measure, ever since the Bullion Re'port first acted in breaking up the 'established relations between property and 'money in the year 1810. The contractive 'action then commenced: and, ever since 'then, until the present period, in a greater 'or less degree, there has been a greater 'reward in indolence than in industry.'

What are the facts established by these extracts, on the authority of the member for Birmingham? That, before the Act of 1819 was dreamt of, the contraction in the currency had taken place; that it commenced five years before he wrote, in 1817; and that, in 1817, money was doubled in value; that, in his neighbourhood, such was the condition of the working classes, that thousands of one single class—namely, manufacturers of nails—were, not figuratively,—oh, no—"I speak literally, not figuratively"—perishing with hunger, or dying by inches, of unwholesome food. Bear in mind these two things—that the contraction began seven years before "Peel's Bill" was introduced, and that money was doubled in value; and all this bitter distress was endured, with inconvertible paper, and 1*l.* and 2*l.* notes. But, perhaps, during the period of which the member for Birmingham was speaking, the Bank of England had been progressively contracting its circulation. By no means. The Bank issues had increased regularly and rapidly from 1806 to 1817. Their amount on a given day in each year—namely, the 31st of March, was as follows:—In 1806, 16,853,000; in 1807, 16,657,000; in 1808, 16,645,000; in 1809, 17,840,000; in 1810, 20,442,000; in 1811, 23,333,000; in 1812, 23,332,000; in 1813, 24,000,000; in 1814, 25,157,000; in 1815, 27,298,000; in 1816, 26,573,000; in 1817, 27,138,000.

At particular periods of these years, there may have been fluctuations in the amount of bank-notes; and there were, in 1816 and 1817, rapid contractions of the currency. You refer to these contractions and their consequences as confirmations of your theory—that distress is the consequence of restricted currency. We do not deny, that distress will follow sudden contractions of the currency; but we assert that such contractions are the inevitable consequences, the necessary and painful correctives, of excessive issues. We admit that, by depreciating the currency, you may be able to obtain higher prices for a time—to command a delusive and temporary prosperity—but we say, that the foundations, both of your currency and your prosperity, are sure to fail you; and that, in proportion to the artificial elevation, will be the severity of the fall. You attribute the distress of 1810, and 1816, and 1825, merely to the contraction of paper, and consider that distress a proof that increased issues would be the remedy. We assert, and in my opinion with much more truth, that the excessive issues are themselves the primary cause of the evil; and, while they seem the symptoms of prosperity, are but generating the causes of certain and tremendous explosion. What was the remedy proposed by the member for Birmingham in 1817? What was his device for enlarging the circulation—and, of course, ensuring the re-establishment of prosperity? He writes thus—

'The most ready and facilitous way of 'effecting this object, in a country like 'England, seems to be in converting a part 'of the permanent and fixed national debt 'into a circulating or floating debt; by 'creating a quantity of circulating Exche'quer bills of various sizes, bearing no 'interest, and with them buying up an 'equal quantity of the national debt. If '10,000,000*l.* of additional money are cre'ated in this way, there is no additional 'debt contracted, nor is there any addi'tional depreciation of money occasioned, 'provided the issue is not carried further 'than will suffice to employ the whole 'labourers of the kingdom, at the usual 'wages to which they have been accus'tomed.'

What an admirable system of currency! that rests for its security upon debt, and has for its standard of value 'the accustomed wages of all classes of labourers throughout the whole United Kingdom.'

I shall now address myself to the immediate question of the appointment of a Select Committee—the nature of its inquiries—and their probable result. The Resolution moved by the member for Whitehaven assumes the fact of universal distress; and proposes an inquiry into the connexion of that distress with the present monetary system. If this Committee shall be unfortunately appointed, and I should be a Member of it, I shall—(and if I am not, I hope that some one, who is a Member of it, will)—address the Committee to this effect—"We admit a great fall of prices since the war—we admit that the profits of capital are low;—but nothing will be so absurd as to assume, without the most extensive inquiry, that the change in the currency has been the sole or the main cause of that depression of price and reduction of profits. There are many causes to be investigated that lie very deep, and the effect of which is not easily ascertained; you cannot make a Report until you have surveyed the condition of the country for the last thirty-nine years—until you have inquired into the peculiar character and effect of that war which frequently gave you almost a monopoly of the markets of the world—into the effect of the stimulus of war prices, and a large Government expenditure—and into the consequences of the cessation of that stimulus. If you are about to take an enlarged and philosophical view of the subject, you must ascertain what has been the effect of eighteen years of uninterrupted peace in reducing the prices of manufactured articles throughout the civilized world; in converting those nations which were your customers in time of war, into rivals and competitors in time of peace!" Why, Sir, does England hope that she can retain for ever that monopoly of supply which she enjoyed during war, when she had destroyed every hostile fleet—when the commercial marine of every other country was at her mercy—when every nation of Europe, except herself,—when Spain, and Portugal, and Germany, and Italy, and Prussia, and Belgium, and Holland, had been exposed to, and were constantly menaced by, hostile invasion from the arms of France? In all these countries industry has revived. They are now at liberty to turn their attention and apply their capital to the supply of many of their wants by means of their own peaceful labour. Does England hope to maintain war prices despite of such competition? Look at the state of manufacturing industry in America and in the countries which I have mentioned, and then consider what influence these causes must have had in reducing the prices of your manufactured articles. Take, again, the influence of other causes, which must, and which ought to, reduce prices here:—the diminished hazard, both of import and export—the reduction of the rates of marine insurance—but, above all, the diminished cost of the raw materials, which are the staple of your manufactures. You buy everything at a less price, and you must sell at a less price. Is it meant that you should pay a much lower price for the raw material, and charge the old price for the manufactured article? Then you must inquire what has been the effect upon prices, of improvements in machinery;—what the effect of the application of steam, in diminishing both the cost of production and the cost of carriage. Can any one doubt that the influence of all these several causes upon prices and upon profits, must be ascertained before you can determine the degree to which they have been affected by the resumption of payments in cash? Again, with respect to land,—I admit that land has fallen; but, does any landlord hope to maintain, since the war, the war prices? During the war, an undue stimulus and excitement were given to agricultural speculation; land was then brought into cultivation which would not adequately repay the cost of cultivation after peace had been established. No man regrets more deeply than myself the consequences to individuals, of throwing that land out of cultivation; but the depreciation of the standard will afford no remedy. Here, again, many other causes—besides the increased value of money—are in operation. What has been the effect of Irish importations upon English prices, and on the profits of English agriculture?—of a perfectly free trade in corn with Ireland? Whatever it has been, it is not owing to the Bill of 1819; it would have existed separately from that Bill. The moment you opened the English markets to Irish produce, from that moment the prices of English produce must have fallen. Again, the operation of the Poor-laws, and of their defective administration, must be inquired into; and, I repeat, you will not be worthy of the name of legislators and statesmen, if, having undertaken this inquiry, you do not attempt, at least, to assign to each of the several causes which I have mentioned, its effect in producing the fall of prices, and the distress of any particular branch of industry.

It is scarcely worth referring to the mere declamation by which the Act of 1819 has been assailed. It is not only described as the source of every domestic calamity, but it is made chargeable with the misfortunes of other nations. Nay, so extensive has been its operation, that one hon. Gentleman has discovered that the Revolution of France, in 1830, was not owing to the *Ordonnances* of July,—but that to the Act of 1819 we are to attribute the downfal of the dynasty of the Bourbons; and that Louis Philippe now sits on a tottering throne, because he cannot command high prices for the productions of France. The hon. member for Whitehaven wisely considers it much better, as a general rule, to deal in vague declamation, and to turn eloquent periods upon "devouring poverty and appalling distress," than to venture on any specific facts. Facts and figures are dangerous things to meddle with, unless they can be relied on; but they are very important on questions of this nature. Prophecies of evil are easily uttered—and can only be met by counter-prophecies—as worthless as themselves. But the hon. Member did make an occasional exception from the general rule of his speech, and appealed to facts. He said, "I take Ireland as my example; I will prove everything by figures; and whatever I say of Ireland will be true, as applied to England." The hon. Gentleman first assumes that Irish disturbances were unknown before the year 1819. His position is this. All Irish disturbance grows out of controversies and quarrels about land; and the depression of the price of agricultural produce, in consequence of a restricted currency, is the main cause both of the distress and the insurrectionary violence in Ireland. Now I meet this assertion by these facts. In 1807, during the war, when prices were high, and when currency was unrestricted, such was the disposition to disturbance in Ireland, that the Insurrection Act was introduced, and remained in force for several successive years. It was allowed to expire; but was introduced again in 1814; and again remained in force for a considerable period. I will not go to earlier periods.

I turn now to the picture given by the hon. Gentleman of the state of Ireland, in respect to agricultural produce. I took down his words; they were to this effect:—

'The cattle have vanished from the 'fields—the plough is no longer at work—'no manure is purchased—land is going 'out of cultivation—agricultural produce 'is declining in quantity—and there is 'universal distress throughout the country.' Observe, we are not now discussing whether the profits of agricultural produce are appropriated exactly as we should wish. Some Irish Member probably will say, "The poor of Ireland derive no benefit from the increased produce, the profits are all taken away by absentees." But that is not the question. We are not inquiring to whom these profits ought to go—we are not determining whether the relation of landlord and tenant be in a healthful and satisfactory state—but whether agriculture be declining in Ireland, because capital cannot be properly applied to the cultivation of the soil.

Now, I have here an account of the annual average quantities of certain articles of agricultural produce exported to Great Britain in triennial periods, ending, respectively, 5th January, 1810, 1820, 1826, and 1830:—

In the period ending 1810, there were exported, on an average,

Oxen.	Sheep.	Swine.
19,376	10,203	9,830

In that ending 1826, the numbers were,

Oxen.	Sheep.	Swine.
57,395	62,819	73,912

	Wheat (Qrs.)	Oats & Oatmeal (Qrs.)
In 1810	61,097	673,895
1826	375,781	
1830	525,619	1,697,509

Now, I ask with confidence, after this statement of facts, what becomes of the assertion, that, in Ireland, cattle have vanished from the fields—that the plough is idle—that the land is left without manure—and that production is rapidly on the decline? The hon. Gentleman then referred to the progress of crime in England; and here again he can find no other cause for the increase of crime, but the Bill of 1819, and the contracted currency. I pass by, of course, the eloquent declamation on the evil of increasing crime. I find it utterly impossible to deny, that where criminals increase, morality is probably on the decline; or to contest the fact, that hardened criminals are dangerous members of society, whose numbers ought, if possible, to be reduced. We are all agreed upon these truths; but the point at issue is this:—Has the increase of crime varied inversely with the increase of paper; and can you fairly charge, on the restoration of the standard, the additional number of criminal committals? Here, again, I refer to the only authentic data—the official returns. They prove that, during the war, and since the war, there has been an increase of crime; but they warrant a presumption that there must have been other causes of that increase in operation, besides contractions in the currency. The committals for crime in England and Wales were as follow, in the several years I shall mention:—In 1811, 5,337; in 1813, 7,164; in 1815, 7,818; in 1816, 9,191; in 1818, 13,567; in 1820, 13,710; in 1821, 13,115; in 1822, 12,241; in 1823, 12,263; in 1825, 14,437.

Now, of these years, the hon. Gentleman has mentioned two in splendid contrast to all others—years when paper was abundant—when there was a full demand for labour—when prices and profits were high. The years were 1818 and 1825. Now, surely, according to the theory of the hon. Gentleman, crime ought to have diminished in those years. But what was the fact? Why, that, in 1818, the criminal committals were more numerous than in any preceding year, with one exception; and that, in the year 1825, they were more numerous than in any preceding year, without a single exception. Now, I have no theory on this subject. I do not maintain that crime increased because paper issues increased; but I doubt the soundness of the hon. Gentleman's theory—at least, I altogether deny his facts, that crime decreased as paper issues were extended. I am well aware of the rejoinder to these statements. "We have no confidence in official documents: they may be fabricated, and, at any rate, they are utterly unworthy of credit, if they be referred to, to disprove the distress which we know to exist." But, surely, our inquiry turns not upon cases of local distress; but upon the general condition of the country; and how can he form any judgment of that condition, except by a reference to official returns, to the general aggregate of the varied transactions of the whole country? It was just in this spirit that the member for one of the Ridings of Yorkshire made an attempt to answer the able and unanswerable speech of the Vice-President of the Board of Trade.

The right hon. Gentleman justly observed, that in order to ascertain whether the people be really suffering under distress of a character such as that which has been represented, you must not take particular instances of individual or local distress, and thence infer their general existence; but you must look at official documents to ascertain the increased or decreased amount of comfort at different periods, as exhibited in the consumption of articles of general use. Now, what were the individual cases which the hon. Gentleman, the member for the North Riding of Yorkshire, offered, to refute the reasoning of the Vice-President of the Board of Trade? He selected three places in order to prove, from the distress there prevailing, the general suffering of the country; and the three fair criteria which he assumed were Oldham and the districts near it, Macclesfield and Whitby. Admirable selections for the purpose! The first is a district in which there are probably more hand-loom weavers than in any other, and was therefore wisely selected as affording instances of individual distress. Macclesfield, it is well known, has been greatly injured by the establishment of the silk manufacture in Manchester. The greater amount of capital, and the larger command over labour and improved machinery which Lancashire possesses, must necessarily render it a very formidable competitor with other places, and Macclesfield among the rest. The rapid progress of civilization, and the developement of mechanical skill, have, I fear, a tendency to produce cases of local distress, by attracting manufacturing industry from places where it has heretofore flourished to more favoured spots; but these vicissitudes (lamentable as their effects are in particular cases) may be indications of general prosperity and improvement, rather than of general suffering and decline. And Whitby, too! True —we gave it a Member last year; but then we all admitted it to be in a declining state, from the local operation of some causes which had led to a transfer of its trade.

Sir, I consider by far the most important consideration connected with this question to be, its bearing upon the condition of the labouring classes. One of the main motives for introducing the Act of 1819 arose from a deep conviction that a constantly depreciating standard was working the ruin of those classes. I was satisfied by evidence and by reasoning, that when you depreciate the standard, the prices of the necessaries of life rise much faster than the wages of labour; and I was convinced that one of the main causes of the gradually declining condition of the industrious classes arose from depreciated paper currency. A constant effort is now made to impress upon those classes a belief that their distress has arisen from the restriction on paper; but I hope they are beginning to understand the true nature of the question; I, too, make my appeal to them. If you can enlist them on your side, no doubt you will have an important ally; if you can convince them that the restoration of inconvertible paper, or a recurrence to a depreciated standard, will be for their advantage,—if, in addresses to political unions, you can successfully denounce those who are favourable to the maintenance of the standard as enemies to the labouring classes,—you will, no doubt, materially advance the object you have in view. But I appeal confidently, to the industrious classes of society. I tell them, their true friends are they who resist a depreciation of the standard, and who maintain the payment of their wages in money of the present value, from the conviction that if that value be lowered, the price of necessaries will increase much more rapidly than the pay of labour. The most affecting statements have been made of the condition of certain classes of the manufacturers. One hon. Gentleman in particular, the member for Oldham (Mr. Fielden), gave a detailed account of their state in that district with which he is more immediately connected. Sir, it is impossible to deny that that is a district in which there exists severe distress. It contains a large body of that particular description of manufacturers who used to gain a livelihood by working at the hand-loom. I know something of their condition, and am ready to admit that it is one deeply to be lamented. The hon. Gentleman, who made this statement, says, that he employs 3,000 power-looms, and that nothing would make him more miserable than the reflection that by the use of that machinery he had contributed to the distress of the hand-loom weavers. Then, Sir, the hon. Member must make up his mind to be miserable; for nothing is more true than that the sudden improvement and universal use of machinery, and especially of the power-loom, have had a considerable effect upon the condition of those who lived by manual weaving. The hon. Gentleman says that the power-loom has been known many years. Why, so was steam-navigation known before it was applied; but it is only within a few years that the power-loom has been brought into almost universal use. The hand-loom weaver (I speak of some parts of Lancashire with which I am acquainted) was frequently a small farmer who resided at a distance from a town, cultivating a small portion of land for the subsistence of his family, and earning a part of his livelihood by working at the hand-loom. When the power-loom was brought into use, that man was placed in a situation of peculiar disadvantage; for hand-loom weaving could not compete with that of the power-loom, and the main spring of his industry was broken. But this is only another instance in which the application of mechanical ingenuity and capital to the perfection of machinery, and the progress of social improvement, have, by the rapidity of their effects, depressed a particular class. It is, surely, absurd to argue from that depression that the whole country is in a declining state. But I ask whether the hon. Gentleman has given the truth, and the whole truth, with respect to the condition of Oldham?

I have before me the account of the Poor Law Commissioners, and it is certainly much at variance with that of the hon. Gentleman. I have seen, too, a letter, which appeared in the public papers, written from Oldham—the letter, apparently, of a writer whose information is extensive and authentic—giving an account of the demand for labour, generally, and its remuneration in that parish. The writer signs himself "An Elector of Oldham," and writes thus:—

'Perhaps no town in Britain has increased in a greater ratio than Oldham; none where fortunes have been accumulated with greater rapidity; nor is there any town where, taken collectively, the working classes are more comfortable in their circumstances, or obtain a better remuneration for their labour. Distress, from particular circumstances, does exist in Oldham, and one main cause of it is the great influx of labourers and artisans from neighbourhoods not enjoying the same prosperity and advantages that Oldham possesses. Another cause, and that a principal one, is the circumstance of the power-loom supplanting the hand-loom, or, in other words, the hand-loom weaver is contending with the power-loom in producing an article at as cheap a rate. The weavers are, however, finding, by sad experience, that this is the case, and, as fast as circumtances will allow, are quitting their original trade and adopting others. This class of men (taking them as a body, a very exemplary and worthy one) are many of them in a very destitute situation; few of them can earn more than from 5*s*. to 7*s*. per week. Science may sometimes, as it does in this instance, destroy capital and abridge labour, but it is to reproduce it, not only with an immense increase, but with a great additional advantage and comfort to society at large. The regular wages paid here to those whose occupation is generally considered as receiving the minimum of remuneration—the labourers—is 2*s*. 6*d*. to 3*s*. per day. Bricksetters' labourers are paid 2*s*. 8*d*. per day, with an allowance of three pints of beer per day. Bricksetters 3*s*. to 3*s*. 6*d*., with the same allowance of beer; and if either labourers or setters work what are termed "over-hours," that is before seven o'clock in the morning, or after six in the evening, such time is always paid for in the same proportion; so that a labourer may obtain 3*s*. 4*d*. per day, and setters 3*s*. 9*d*. to 4*s*. 4½*d*. Joiners, masons, carpenters, slaters, and other artisans, generally are paid not less than bricksetters with the same allowance of beer. That these prices are paid throughout the borough, I could bring hundreds of witnesses to prove. Hats were formerly the staple trade of Oldham, but of late years have been greatly superseded in extent by that gigantic branch of commerce—the cotton trade. The hatters, as a body, are fairly paid, some branches of the trade extravagantly, and all tolerably well employed. In the cotton-mills, the men's wages are from 15*s*. to 30*s*.; women and children's from 2*s*. 3*d*. to 8*s*. or 10*s*. Although the population of the township of Oldham has increased from 16,690 in the year 1811, to 32,381 in the year 1831, still the amount of Poor-rates levied is no more in the pound than it was at the former period; and in the years 1816 and 1817, they were nearly double the present amount. In the year ending March, 1832, there was levied in England, for Poor-rates, 8,255,315*l*. 12*s*., out of which there was expended for the relief of the poor, 6,731,131*l*. 10*s*.; consequently the amount of relief, taking the population at 13,086,675, would be 10*s*. 3¼*d*. per head, averaging the whole of England. The amount paid the poor in Oldham in the last year, was 3,313*l*. 13*s*. 7*d*., or averaging 2*s*. 0½*d*. per head; thus showing, that if the amount expended in relieving the poor is any criterion of the situation of the working classes, Oldham stands but at one-fifth proportion when put in comparison with the rest of England. Since the time of the panic, in the years 1825 and 1826, a period in which many towns have been retrograding, there has been expended in public improvements (and we have no corporation, or anything like it, to promote such expenses), upwards of 100,000*l*.'

This statement is exactly confirmed by the Report of the Commissioners. They say, that Oldham has, at a former period, suffered, from causes which they mention, considerable distress; but that, with the exception of the hand-loom weavers, it is in an improving and prosperous condition. The failure of a bank in the neighbourhood, after the panic of 1825, was one of the main causes of the distress in Oldham; and it is because the permission again to issue 1*l*. and 2*l*. notes would lead to the same circumstances which produced that failure, that I now pause before I consent to a proposal for their re-issue.

Sir, I have made it an object of care to inquire what is the condition of artisans in the midland districts; and I have here an account of the rate of wages paid, at present, in several towns in Litchfield, Coventry, Birmingham, and other places, to the following descriptions of workmen: carpenters, masons, bricklayers, plumbers, plasterers, and painters. I take Birmingham; in that town they are as follows:—

		s.	d.		s.	d.
Carpenters - -	from	3	4	to	4	2
Masons - -	-	3	6		4	0
Bricklayers - -	-	3	4		3	10
Bricklayers' labourers	-	2	2		2	6
Plasterers - -	-	3	4		4	0
Painters - -	-	3	6		6	0
Plumbers - -	-	4	0		5	0

The rate of wages in other towns varies but little from the above. Some small reduction must be made from this amount of wages in the case of carpenters, masons, and bricklayers, on account of the expense of tools which they have to provide; but the rate of wages appears ample to ensure, with present prices, a decent and comfortable maintenance for the workman and his family. What is the object of this Motion—the object distinctly, and in terms avowed by the member for the North Riding of Yorkshire (Mr. Cayley)? To raise prices;—no doubt that is the intention, and will be the effect of it. How can any one doubt that the workman who now earns wages of from *3s. 6d.* to *4s.* a-day, has a much greater command over the necessaries and comforts of life than he would have, were you to increase the currency, and raise the prices of provisions and all other articles? I believe it to be a fact established by official papers, and returns of the quantities of articles of general use consumed, that the condition of the labouring classes is greatly improved since the period when we had an inconvertible, unrestricted paper currency. If you compare the consumption of hops, of malt, of tea and coffee, at different periods, you will find that the industrious classes have now a much greater command of those necessaries of life than they had before. If the fact be so, I call on you, as you value the true interests of the people, to pause before you lend your sanction to any scheme, the avowed purpose of which is to increase the price of the necessaries of life.

If this Committee be appointed, when will its labours terminate? It is not a Committee to adjust the details of some plan, on the principle of which those who support the Committee are agreed, but a Committee without a plan, and the members of which entertain principles the most conflicting. Let us survey the course of this debate, and see whether, among the advocates of inquiry (I say nothing of the opposers, of whom, I suppose, some portion will be on the Committee) there is that uniformity of general views—that we may expect from their labours any early remedy for our distress. The hon. Gentleman who spoke first, the author of the motion, was wise enough to produce no plan—to avoid the suggestion of any specific remedy. He complained, indeed, that the monetary system was manifestly defective; for the population had increased—the produce had increased—but we had tied down the standard, and prevented its increase. The hon. Gentleman might just as well complain that "roads have increased—new countries have been discovered,—but, alas! the yard and the mile remain of the same length as before." We hear of an "antiquated standard;" as if the standard had got decrepid through age. You might as well say that the pound weight, or the quart measure was too antiquated for present use. A definite weight of metal is as much a standard, a measure of value, as either the one or the other. If the hon. Gentleman does not mean the standard, but the amount of currency, he is totally in error in supposing that the currency cannot vary in amount—cannot accommodate itself to the growing wants of the people—because the standard is invariable. Every improvement in the economical use of money is a variation in the amount of the currency; and the hon. Gentleman's objection, if it be worth anything, is fatal to any standard at all. The hon. Gentleman, however, contented himself with the attempt to show that the present system is chargeable with every imaginable evil; but, as I before said, he wisely abstained from the suggestion of any remedy.

He was followed by the member for Oldham (Mr. Cobbett), who was ready to agree with him in his vote, but totally abjured his principles. I must say, that I never was more disappointed, than by the speech of the member for Oldham. He began by claiming peculiar indulgence for himself, on account of his profound study of the whole subject, and because no man ever made a speech upon it, containing right principles, which was not borrowed from him. "The noble Lord," he says, "made a good speech; but, then, it was all copied from me." I think I may assure the hon. Member, that he need not entertain any fears of plagiarism in respect to the speeches which he delivers in this House. I have heard nothing from him, on any occasion, for which he may not reckon on a copyright, which will never be infringed. So little did his observations refer to the question before us, that while he was engaged in their delivery, an ingenuous young Member, who entered the House at the time, inquired from me "whether the currency question was over?" I said "No; this is the currency question." He replied, "I thought, from his speech, that it was the Navy Estimates." All that the hon. Member could produce on this question of the currency was, the notes of an old speech he had intended to make on the Navy Estimates. The hon. Member wants no depreciation of the standard,—he will have no issue of paper —("rotten paper"—I fear he said in the hearing of the hon. member for Birmingham.) "Oh, no, give me," he says, "the King's coin, with the King's image upon it." There is something so amiable in his loyalty, that one would forgive his errors, even if he be wrong. Still he consents to go into the Committee, the object of which is to depreciate the standard, and all the remedy he proposes for all our distresses, and all our evils, is to cut down every estimate, and every expense, to the level of 1792. "And yet," says the hon. Member, "England ought to assume a high tone, and till poor Pitt was corrupted by the Whigs, she did assume a high tone; Spain and France were not allowed to have navies and they ought not to be allowed to have navies." —But how we are to maintain this high tone, and control the naval force of Europe, with the Estimates of 1792, the hon. Member did not clearly show. I should like to ask him how would he deal with the possessions that have been acquired since 1792,—with the Cape of Good Hope, and Malta, and the Mauritius? The hon. Gentleman says, that we had a most successful war; that we annihilated the naval force of all our enemies:—and yet he is surprised that we have more admirals at the end of that war, than we had at its commencement! This Gentleman was the second speaker in favour of the Motion; the third was the member for Knaresborough, who says, that the plan of the hon. member for Oldham (of course one of his colleagues in the Committee) is a plan of confiscation, rapine, and blood. His remedy was the total abolition of coin, and the payment of bank-notes in bars of gold. The fourth speaker was the hon. member for Wolverhampton. He says, maintain the standard, but throw every burthen on the land; the land had, he observed, escaped every charge, and it was but right that it should be made responsible, now, for the national debt. Then came the hon. member for the North Riding of Yorkshire. His remedy, we know, is a rise of prices.

The hon. Gentleman, the member for Birmingham, has not yet spoken; I know not whether he still adheres to the plan which he recommended in 1817, for an unlimited depreciation of the standard, and whether he still maintains the proposition which he then maintained, that you always ought to take the market-price of bullion as the criterion of value, and that you might go on issuing bank-notes, and raising that market-price, even until you made the guinea pass for 100*l.* or 200*l.*, without causing injury to any one—except, possibly, the public annuitant, who should take care of himself, or of whom the Government might take care. [Mr. *Attwood:* Provided you raised prices to the war level only.] I believe there was no such qualification; but if there was, it makes no difference. Now, perhaps, it might be right to add to the Committee some opponents of these six or seven Gentlemen; but send even them, alone, into a Committee, with the opinions they entertain, to consider this question,—to examine all the other questions which I have mentioned,—and I should like to ask what probability there would be of any practical remedy? You find a patient labouring under every disease; and for his cure, you send for physicians, entertaining totally opposite opinions on his case. Sangrado is summoned from Oldham, and Chuchillo from Birmingham. But what will be the condition of the patient meanwhile? Why, he will be utterly neglected, while the enraged doctors are debating about their principles, and cuffing each other.

Will the country believe that the real object of the Committee is any other than a depreciation of the standard? What will be the consequence on commercial transactions? Will any man sell an estate? If there be a prospect that, in two months, the sovereign will pass for 25*s.*, will not every man get the sovereign as soon as he can?

If you send it forth to the world that you will have a vague inquiry, which will probably end in depreciation, the consequence, the inevitable consequence, will be ruin to every debtor—to the class you intend to benefit. All debts that can be exacted without delay, will be,—and justly; for the debt, if contracted within the last eighteen years, was contracted in the improved currency. Every man who enforces the payment of such debts due to him, will have not only law, but equity and honesty on his side. What will be the condition of the banks which have undertaken to discharge their promissory notes in gold, and to receive deposits of gold from their customers? Will not the depositors demand their deposits, and the holders of notes press for payment, without delay? Again, will any man advance 20,000*l.* in sovereigns on a mortgage, when he is certain of being repaid in a depreciated currency? The question at issue is not depreciation or no depreciation. The Vice-President of the Board of Trade, in so describing it, has stated it too unfavourably for his own argument; the question is, whether depreciation shall be ultimately effected after a tedious protracted inquiry? That is quite a different question from sudden depreciation. Such depreciation is bad enough, but, as the result of a lingering inquiry, it would be the greatest curse that was ever inflicted. What is the country suffering under? I believe it to be suffering partly from the agitation connected with the political excitement of recent times, partly from a state of doubt and suspense as to the final settlement of great questions affecting our commercial policy. The Bank Charter is still under consideration, the East and West India questions are not yet arranged; if to these causes of restlessness you are going to superadd doubts as to the standard—if this be your remedy for calming the excitement that prevails, and mitigating the doubt and suspense that hang upon other unsettled questions—for God's sake close your doors, and depart to your homes; for your sittings here will throw chaos into worse confusion.

Sir, I shall now conclude. The subject is far from exhausted—but there are limits to the patience of the House. Before I sit down, let me make an earnest appeal to those whom I address, to weigh well the consequences of the vote they may give. If they foresee, that injustice will be done by the unsettlement of the contracts of twenty years—that confusion will arise—that commercial dealings will be paralyzed by doubts as to the future value of the currency;—above all, if they see cause to apprehend that the wages of labour will not rise in any corresponding ratio with the rise of prices, and that, therefore, the condition of the labourer will be depressed—let them reject the plausible appeal, "that distress ought to be inquired into," and refuse to do a great public wrong, though it be covered with a specious veil. I say, respectfully, but firmly, that this is the manly course—this, the true fulfilment of a high and sacred trust. Doubtless, much consideration is due to the feelings and wishes of your constituents. To them you owe—as was truly said by that illustrious man, who, in comprehensive and philosophical views of all public affairs, and of the great principles of social government, surpassed all the statesmen who preceded him, or who have followed—as much as some of them may have exceeded him, in the practical application of official knowledge and experience—"to them you owe," says Mr. Burke, "the sacrifice of your time, and your pleasures, and your repose. But to them you do not owe the sacrifice, in the weightiest matters, of your mature and conscientious judgment." "That judgment is not their property, and you abandon the first of duties, if, in deference to the wishes, you consent to sacrifice the interests, of your constituents."

For what is it, Sir, that we are sent here? For what is it that we are placed on the mountain top, but that we may embrace a wider horizon within our view, and penetrate further than those upon the plain, through the mists and darkness which hang upon the future. Perform your duty—show that you are not engaged in a mere "scuffling local agency,"—that you are fit to be intrusted with the destinies of an empire; and you will find your reward—my belief is, in the applause of your constituents—but, unquestionably, in the approbation of your own consciences. If you suffer, you will suffer in a noble cause, and you will be repaid with ample interest of honour and reputation, for any temporary loss of popular favour. Read the controversy between Mr. Burke and his constituents in 1780, and judge of your reward by your own admiration of the rejected candidate. They told him, "that his impolitic stubbornness would cost him his seat." If you hear the same language, be prepared with his dignified reply—

‘I wished to be a Member of Parliament, to have my share of doing good and resisting evil.’ ‘I deceive myself most grossly, if I would not much rather pass the remainder of my life hidden in the recesses of the deepest obscurity, feeding my mind even with the visions and imaginations of such things than to be placed on the most splendid throne of the universe, tantalized with a denial of the practice of all which can make the greatest situation any other than the greatest curse.’

He stood before his constituents accused of no venality—of no neglect of duty—of no sacrifice of their interests to his ambition, or to their own hasty and inconsiderate views. The accusation against him was, that he had preferred to their wishes the dictates of his own humane, deliberate, enlightened judgment, and the true interests of the constituents themselves. Follow his example, and you may truly say with him, if you are obnoxious to a similar charge—

‘In every accident which may happen through life—in pain, in sorrow, in depression and distress—I will call to mind this accusation, and be comforted.’

But my conviction is, that a different fate is reserved for you—that juster views are now taken of the duties which you are called upon to fulfil, and that the true way to secure the applause and lasting confidence of your constituents, is to claim, for yourselves and for them, the right to abide, in high matters like this, by the dictates of your own deliberate conviction.

Colonel Torrens moved an adjournment of the Debate.

Lord *Althorp* put it to the Members, whether, after so many hon. Members had spoken, it was desirable further to adjourn the debate?

Colonel Torrens persisting in his Motion, the House divided on the question of adjournment. Ayes 98; Noes 318—Majority 220.

It was, however, ultimately agreed that the debate should be adjourned.

Debate adjourned accordingly.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Wednesday, April 24, 1833.

Minutes.] Petitions presented. By Lord Suffield, from fifty-one Places; by the Duke of Rutland, the Earl of Shaftesbury, and the Marquess of Bath, from a Number of Places,—against Slavery.—By the Duke of Rutland, from Sheepshead, for a Factories' Regulation Bill.—By the Earl of Shaftesbury, Lord Suffield, and the Bishop of London, from several Places,—for the Better Observance of the Sabbath; and by Lord Suffield, from Truro, for Emancipating the Jews.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, April 24, 1833.

Minutes.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of Mr. John Romilly, an Account of the Adjournments of Bankrupts' Examinations, *sine die*, since the 11th January, 1832, by the London Commissioners of Bankrupts.—On the Motion of Mr. Finn, the Amount of Salaries and Retired Allowances of the Judges of Ireland, in the year 1792, and subsequent increase.—On the Motion of Mr. Harvey, an Account of the Number of References brought into the Offices of the respective Masters in Chancery, under Orders and Decrees of the Court, from 1st March, 1828, to the latest period.— On the Motion of Mr. Aaron Chapman, an Account of the Number of American Ships, and their Registered Tonnage entered inwards at Liverpool from New York, from 1st January, 1832, to 1st January, 1833; and of British Ships for the same period; of the Importation of Cotton into the Port of Liverpool from the United States, both in Foreign and British Ships, for the same period; and of the Exportation of Salt from Liverpool to Prussian Ports in British and Foreign Ships, in the same space of time.—On the Motion of Mr. Rotch, a List of all Bills of Indictment for Felony against Middlesex Prisoners delivered over by the Justices of the Peace for that County, to the Justices of Gaol Delivery of Newgate, since the 1st of January, 1832; and of those who were not delivered over to the Justices of Gaol delivery of Newgate.

Bill. Read a second time:—Lighting and Watching; Assizes' Removal.

Petitions presented. By Sir William Folkes, from Launditch (Norfolk), for a Repeal of the Duty on Malt and Hops.—By Lord Ebrington, Sir William Folkes, and Messrs. Roper, Kemyss Tynte, Hodges, and Robinson, from Torrington, and a great many other Places,—against Slavery.—By Lord Ebrington, from Ashburton, for a Commutation of Tithes; and from the North Devon Agricultural Association, for rendering the Imperial Measure compulsory.—By Mr. Hodges, from Staplehurst, for a Better Observance of the Sabbath.

Window Tax.] Mr. *Robinson* presented a Petition from the Churchwardens, Overseers, and Vestry of the parish of St. Paul, Covent Garden, praying for the repeal of the Window Tax. The Petition was signed by 400 inhabitants of the parish, who from the nature of their information, were able expressly to say, that the householders generally would no longer pay this most oppressive and unjust tax. The opinion of the inhabitants of the metropolis, and of those residing in all the principal towns of the country, was unanimous as to the necessity of having this tax repealed. If the noble Lord (Lord Althorp) was unable to give up the whole of the Window-tax, without laying on some other impost to make up the deficiency, it would be better if the noble Lord would give up the Window-tax, and lay on an adequate increase of the House duty, taking care that it should be equitably arranged, so that there might no longer be a contrast kept up between the rating of the houses of the rich and of the poor. He hoped to see so disgraceful a tax as that on windows expunged from the

Statute-books of the land; and he thought the best plan that could be pursued by the House would be to repeal the tax altogether, and then to support Ministers in laying on an additional tax to the same amount, if that were necessary, and the tax could not be dispensed with. But it was Ministers who should be expected to say how the amount should be levied—to bring forward some plan of their own—and not to make a stand against those who called for the reduction of any particular tax, by asking how the deficiency in the revenue should be made up. He should not do his duty to those who had complimented him by putting the petition into his hand, nor to his constituents in the city of Worcester, if he did not call upon the House to enforce the repeal of the Window-tax. He declared that it was his intention to support the Motion for the repeal whenever it was brought on.

Mr. *Cobbett* contended that the noble Lord might have got more means to enable him to reduce the taxes to a greater extent than he had proposed to do. Why had he not struck off a number of unmerited pensions? There was a number of women who took more of the public money than was necessary to support 25,500 sailors and marines, with their officers. If the noble Lord (Lord Althorp) would pledge himself to reduce that expenditure, he (Mr. Cobbett) would lend him his strenuous support.

Mr. *Hume* said, it was perfectly true, as stated by the hon. member for Oldham, that a very large sum of money was paid to females by way of pensions, and the late Parliament had been exceedingly blameable in extending charity to noble Lords and Ladies, instead of having some charitable consideration for the distresses of the labouring and industrious classes. When he saw the Returns of the number of poor persons who had been distrained upon for small amounts of taxes, and whose goods had been sold, he was convinced it was exceedingly unbecoming to allow a single pension of *50l.* to be given to the class of persons he had described. The noble Lord had proposed an efficient relief, but if he wished to do any good he must act on a large scale. If the noble Lord had not the means immediately within his reach, he must consider whether there were not other species of property untaxed; for instance, real property that descended from father to son should be placed in the same scale of taxation as other property. He was sorry that the hon. member for Colchester (Mr. Harvey) had not pressed his Motion for an inquiry into the nature of the services for which pensions were supposed to have been granted, but he hoped that the hon. Member would be induced to renew it on some early day.

Mr. *Harvey* was sorry that any notion was entertained that he had abandoned his Motion on the subject of the Pension Lists. He had, in fact, only postponed it till the 22nd of May. The object of that Motion was, not to deprive any of the pensioners of the payments they had received, or were entitled to receive, but to relieve them from the odium so generally understood to attach to them, as if there were any women in England, Scotland, or Ireland, who received pensions for which they had not given to the country a full and adequate consideration. For this purpose he should move for a Return of all pensioners, and the consideration they had given for their pensions. There was one suggestion which he would in the mean time throw out—that when it was intended to take the sense of the House on any point, it would be well to have an intimation to that effect stated in the votes of the House. In that case hon. Members would take care to be present on particular occasions, or at least they would have no excuse for their absence. Before he sat down, he begged to repeat that on the 22nd of May he would bring forward his Motion, and make an appeal to the gallantry of hon. Members, when the ladies of England now on the Pension-lists would have an opportunity of vindicating themselves from the ungenerous supposition that any of them was receiving one sixpence for which an equivalent had not been given.

Petition laid on the Table.

STATE OF THE COUNTRY—MONETARY SYSTEM.—ADJOURNED DEBATE.] Colonel *Torrens* moved the Order of the Day for resuming the debate. The hon. and gallant Officer then proceeded to say, though he believed it would be expedient to appoint a Select Committee to inquire into the state of our monetary system, yet he was not one of those who sought to lower or degrade the ancient standard of value, upon the faith of which the engagements of the country have been contracted. He

(Colonel Torrens) could not support a proposition for lowering or degrading the ancient standard, on the ground so well stated by the Vice-President of the Board of Trade—that lowering the value of the currency reduced the real wages of the working classes. This opinion he had always held, and had repeatedly expressed. With the permission of the House, he would read a very short passage on this subject from a pamphlet he had published in 1819, for the purpose of pointing out the evils too fatally realized, of the mode in which it was proposed to return to cash-payments. 'The first, and certainly the 'most injurious consequence of a fall in 'the value of the circulating medium is, the 'reduction which it effects in the real wages 'of labour. A fall in the value of money 'is the same thing as a rise in the price 'of all the necessaries of life; and experience proves to us, that the rate of wages 'is somewhat tardy in proportioning itself 'to the price of the necessaries of life. 'In almost all trades the sum which is 'paid for labour is regulated by a contract, 'tacit or implied, between the masters and 'the workmen; and notwithstanding the 'fluctuations in the value of money, and 'the price of necessaries, this sum paid 'for labour varies but little for considerable 'periods. While the Restriction Act remains in force, and particularly if the 'Bank continue to make undue advances 'in favour of Government, the currency 'may occasionally fall below its customary 'level, and thereby render wages inadequate to the support of the labourer's 'family, increase the number of paupers, 'and render the pressure upon the parishes more heavy.' To these principles propounded in 1819, he (Colonel Torrens) still adhered, and he could not consistently give his support to any proposition, having for its object to lower and degrade the current standard of the currency. With him the question was, whether, without degrading the standard, our monetary system could be improved? The right hon. Baronet (Sir Robert Peel) who concluded the debate last night, and who spoke as he always speaks, with so much power and effect, had challenged us to disprove that the Act of 1819 was not founded upon just principles, and he (Colonel Torrens) would accept the challenge; he was prepared to show that the Act of 1819, for restoring the ancient metallic standard of value, was, perhaps, the most extraordinary instance of rash, precipitate, and mischievous legislation, which the history of Parliament contained. General principles were applied without regard to the particular circumstances which modified and controlled their operation. And not only so, the general principles intended to be brought into practical operation were misunderstood and departed from. The avowed intention was to restore the ancient standard of value; but instead of doing this, the Legislature imposed a new and a higher standard. Before the suspension of cash payments in 1797, the standard of the currency was coin, which could be legally melted or exported. By the Act of 1819, for resuming cash payments, this ancient standard was abandoned—the currency was made convertible into coin which could not be legally melted and exported. This departure from the ancient standard was a fraud upon the public to a certain extent whenever the foreign exchanges happened to be unfavourable, of at least three per cent upon all money engagements. For though the law prohibiting the melting and exporting of the coin of the realm was evaded; yet the evasion of the law was attended with inconvenience and risk; and when the exchanges became unfavourable, the value of bullion which could be sworn off for exportation was three per cent higher than that of the bullion which could not be sworn off. Thus a new and a higher standard was inflicted on the country, and an injurious facility was given for contracting the currency and reducing prices. But this was not all—by the ancient laws of our coinage, both gold and silver were legal tenders to any amount; and previous to the suspension of cash payments, all debts and engagements were incurred upon the broad understanding that the debtor had the option of paying either in gold or silver; and, in point of fact, payments were sometimes made in one metal, and sometimes in the other, as their relative value happened to vary. The practice of making both metals a legal tender was long prevalent in England. From 1257 till 1664, the current value of the gold coin, in relation to the silver coin, was regulated by Proclamation, and payments to any amount might be made in either. From 1664 down to 1717 the relative of gold to silver was not fixed by authority; and, practically, silver was the only legal tender. An alteration in the regulation of the Mint occurred in 1717, when a guinea was made equivalent to 21*s.* in silver. But the market value of the silver contained in 21*s.* was greater than the value of a guinea; the public had an interest in paying in gold, and hence gold, instead of silver, was employed, by common consent, as the legal tender. In 1774 it was enacted, that silver coin, when paid by tale, should not be legal tender for sums above 25*l.*; but the option was still left to the public to discharge engagements of any amount in silver coin, according to its value by weight, after the rate of 5*s.* 2*d.* per ounce. From 1774, down to the Act for the resumption of cash-payments, in 1819, the public had the legal right to discharge all engagements in silver, at the rate of 5*s.* 2*d.* per ounce. When cash payments were required, then came into operation the Act of 1816, by which gold was declared to be the only legal tender for sums above 40*s.*, and by which the public were deprived of the option always before enjoyed, of paying in silver at the rate of 5*s.* 2*d.* per ounce. Thus it appeared, on the fullest evidence, that by the Act of 1819, Parliament in its wisdom, or rather in its ignorance, did not re-establish the ancient standard of value, but, on the contrary, established a different standard, depriving the public of the option of making payments in whatever metal might be relatively the cheapest. Practically there could be only one standard, and what the Legislature should have done in order to prevent the metal which might be sold too low in relation to the other, from being driven out, was, to let it circulate at an agio according to its market, and not according to its Mint price. But the whole course of the Government and of the Parliament of that day, in relation to the currency, was one continuous blunder. In departing from the ancient standard, they selected for their altered standard that metal which experience had shown to be most liable to fluctuations in value. When the balance of foreign payments was unfavourable, the increase in the value of gold was always greater than the increase in the value of silver. In proportion as it contained greater value in less bulk, gold would always, in the first instance, be preferred to silver for the purpose of being exported to balance an unfavourable foreign account; and the value of gold in the home-market, in relation to silver, must rise to the full amount of the difference of carriage before silver began to be sent abroad. Again, the quantity of silver was so large, and the proportion employed in the arts was so considerable, that several millions might be abstracted from the general market without materially affecting its value. On the other hand, the quantity of gold was comparatively so small, and of this small quantity so large a proportion was used for currency, that the abstraction from the channels of circulation of quantity which would have scarcely a perceptible effect on the value of silver, might have a considerable effect upon the value of gold. It was clear, then, from general principles, that whenever an unfavourable balance of foreign payments occurred, the value of gold rose in a higher proportion than the value of silver, and that, of the two metals, silver was the most eligible standard. But this was not all. The Legislature of 1819 not only misunderstood the nature of the standard which they intended to restore, but they neglected all the circumstances, by which the metals composing that standard, in the interval between the suspension and the resumption of cash payments, had been themselves enhanced in value. Many causes had concurred to increase the value of gold. By the return to cash payments a new demand for gold, to the amount of from 25,000,000*l.* to 30,000,000*l.*, was created, while the contemporaneous changes from paper to metallic currency, which were effected in Russia, Austria, Denmark, and the United States, occasioned a still further demand for the precious metals to the amount of at least 25,000,000*l.* The whole of the increased demand for the precious metals could not have been less than 50,000,000*l.* sterling. But all the gold supposed to exist in the commercial world could scarcely have been more than 500,000,000*l.*, while the annual supply, before it was reduced by the troubles in South America, was stated by Humboldt to be 1,600,000*l.* Now, if there had been no diminution in the annual supply of the precious metals, the increased demand for them to be used as coin would have materially enhanced their value. But while the demand increased, the supply diminished. The civil wars in South America suspended the working of the mines, and, instead of receiving supplies of the precious metals from South America, we actually exported specie thither. From these co-operating causes, the value of gold throughout the commercial world had advanced, or, in other words, the price of commodities had fallen. His hon. friend the member for the city of London had shown that a great proportion of the fall in the price of commodities had been occasioned by the increased facility of production, and the larger quantities in which commodities were brought to market. But those facts did not disprove the rise in the value of currency. On the contrary, they showed another cause of that rise. Value was relative, and a rise in the value of gold, as compared with other articles, might be occasioned either by increasing the cost of obtaining the metals, or by diminishing the cost of obtaining other articles. The facts brought forward by the hon. Member established this—that the value of the precious metals had been enhanced by a two-fold cause. In point of fact, the price of commodities measured the value of money; and the fall in general prices showed the rise in the value of the currency. Prices had fallen one-half, and therefore the value of our metallic standard had been doubled. Now, the Act of 1819, which the right hon. Baronet asserted to have been passed with so much deliberation and precaution, and with so careful a regard to justice and to sound principles, was passed in utter ignorance of all the principles which regulate value, and of all the circumstances which limit the application of general principles. The abolition of one-pound notes was another evil inflicted on the country by the ignorance of Parliament. The right hon. Baronet pronounced an eloquent speech against small notes. Every objection which he urged against them was equally applicable to five and ten-pound notes. The evils were not confined to small notes. They were inherent in the system. Extensive and calamitous experience had now established the fact, that a currency, consisting of the precious metals, and of paper convertible into these metals on demand, was liable to sudden and very considerable fluctuation, between the extremes of excess and of deficiency. Though no excess should ever be created, yet deficiency would occasionally occur. Redundant currency and the general rise in prices, checking exportation, and encouraging importation, were not the only—perhaps not the principal—causes of an unfavourable balance of foreign payment. Foreign expenditure—foreign loans—deficient harvests—excessive and mistaken speculations—might severally or conjointly create an amount of foreign debt beyond what the ordinary amount of foreign credits could liquidate, and thus cause the demand for foreign bills to exceed the supply. In this state of things foreign bills would bear a premium, and the bullion-merchant would obtain a profit by consigning the precious metals to his correspondents abroad—drawing for the amount, and disposing of his bills in the market. The banks of circulation would, as before, have their notes returned in exchange for gold; and to avert a dangerous run upon their coffers, would be compelled to contract their issues until the value of the currency was so increased that the exportation of the coin no longer yielded a profit. When paper, issued in excess, or an unfavourable balance, arising from other causes, had occasioned a run upon the banks of circulation, it became the interest of those establishments to contract their issues, not merely in the degree necessary to stop the run and restore the currency to its standard value, but in that greater degree which might be requisite in order to raise the currency above its standard value, and to enable the directors, upon favourable terms, to replenish the exhausted coffers of the banks. When a run had taken place upon the banks which issue paper, the directors of these establishments could not ascertain, with any precision, the degree in which their issues ought to be contracted, in order to effect the two-fold object of arresting the drain upon their treasure, and of replenishing their coffers upon favourable terms. The necessity of contraction they would see; but, possessing no indications of the precise point at which it might safely and advantageously stop, they would often carry it considerably beyond what the actual circumstances of the case required. Hence, after every recurrence of excess or of an unfavourable foreign balance, a mixed currency, composed of coin and of paper, convertible upon demand, would suffer a much more considerable contraction, and acquire a higher value, than a currency purely metallic. The fluctuations in the value of such mixed currency, when occasioned by an unfavourable foreign balance, always became more considerable as the proportion which the paper bore to the coin was increased. Again, a mixed currency, composed of coin and of paper, convertible into coin on demand, was constantly exposed to still more sudden and violent diminutions in amount, in consequence of the stoppage of the banks by which the paper was circulated. The crisis of 1797, and the panic of 1825-6, were far from being extreme or aggravated instances of the evils inherent in this vicious monetary system. It was on all hands acknowledged, that if during the panic of 1825 we had been threatened with danger from abroad, or visited with a scarcity of corn at home, the crash would have been beyond all comparison more extensive and appalling. Under such circumstances, the failure of the London and country banks would have been followed by the stoppage of the Bank of England. As it was, that establishment had the greatest difficulty in providing gold to meet the extraordinary demand upon its coffers; and all the powers of the Mint, called into the utmost activity, could scarcely convert bullion into coin with sufficient rapidity for the occasion. On that occasion it was the liberality of the French bank, in permitting the British coin deposited with it to be withdrawn, which saved the Bank of England from the necessity of stopping payment. Unless our present system of currency were amended by the timely interference of the Legislature, it would go on to occasion periodical and aggravated distress, until, in a national bankruptcy, it would find its euthanasia. Thus the evils attributed by the right hon. member for Tamworth to the circulation of one-pound notes, was inherent in a system of currency consisting of coin and of paper-money issued by irresponsible individuals, and payable on demand at the option of the holder. What was the remedy? He would endeavour briefly to point it out. In the first place, he would make silver the standard instead of gold. This, as he had already explained, would render the currency more steady, and would prevent, to a certain extent, those fluctuations which had proved so ruinous to trade. In the second place, he would adopt the principle of the late Mr. Ricardo, and make the paper currency payable, not in coin, but in ingots of silver, to the amount of 100*l.* or 200*l.* This would secure the banks of circulation from political passions, and from runs having for object the embarrassment of the Government. In the third place, he would permit the re-issuing of one and two-pound notes. This would extend to the agricultural and thinly-peopled districts the advantages of credit and circulation, of which they were now deprived. And, in the fourth place, he would secure to the people the whole benefit of issuing paper money, which was now unjustly monopolized by the Bank of England. This, which had been suggested on the soundest principles of political economy by Mr. Ricardo, would place 40,000,000*l.* at the disposal of the Treasury. He need not dilate upon the vast benefit which the adoption of this arrangement would secure to the country. Thirty millions might be applied to the public service, and would, for a period of six years, allow of a reduction of taxation, to the amount of 5,000,000*l.* annually. Ten millions would remain, which might be applied to the immediate relief of distress. He begged pardon of the House for having occupied their attention so long. In conclusion he would repeat, that the Amendment of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not inconsistent with the Motion of the hon. member for Whitehaven, and he was ready to vote for both propositions. He was ready to affirm that the ancient standard of value ought not to be degraded; and he was prepared to vote for a Select Committee to inquire into the distress of the country, with the view of ascertaining how far that distress could be relieved by an improvement in our system of banking and of paper currency.

Mr. *Patrick Stewart* said, he was anxious to say a few words on the subject of the debate. When he had first heard the Motion introduced, although favourable to the principle of inquiry into the state of the country, he still was a little jealous of the real objects which the mover had in view, differing, as he did, in opinions upon other topics with the hon. member for Whitehaven; but, as the debate proceeded, his doubts had been removed, and he now felt confident that he should best discharge his duty by voting for the Motion. This could not be looked upon as a party question. On former occasions, indeed, when a Ministry had been for some time settled in office, and consequently responsible to a great extent for the state of the country, a Motion for a General Inquiry was not only a usual, but a fair course, in order to try their stability. But this Motion could not be looked upon in such a point of view, because the hon. member for Whitehaven, in stating, that great and general distress existed, attributed that distress to causes which existed long antecedent to the accession of the present Ministry to office. They had heard, in the course of last night, and the night before, much of the decrease of distress and suffering, yet, notwithstanding what had been said of Oldham and Glasgow in proof of this assertion, they could not shut their eyes to the fact that much distress and misery prevailed in the agricultural, manufacturing, commercial, and shipping interests. Much of that distress, he, in common with others, attributed to the monetary system established in 1819 by the Bill bearing the name of the right hon. Baronet opposite; but he was far from saying that it was the sole and universal cause of change and misery. He did not ascribe to it alone the great fall which every commodity had suffered in price; nor did he accuse it of having displaced the Bourbons, or agitated the states of continental Europe. He did not even assert, that by its Amendment, or abrogation, former prosperity would be restored; but certainly among many causes operating to produce distress, that measure bore a prominent and principal station. If he did not hold this opinion, he should vote for inquiry; because, among the intelligent and industrious classes of society, there was a deep and settled conviction that something was radically bad, and positively ruinous, in that measure; and which feeling would prevent any Government from silencing the demand for investigation. He was convinced, however, that we then made a fatal alteration in our standard of value; and that the evils which it spread throughout the land, were still in rapid and destructive progress. Great as the loss had been, he should refuse to go back if he could believe that the country was at the end of its sufferings; but, believing the evils to be still in progress, it was impossible for the Act of 1819 to escape being subjected to another and a final trial. Nor does it, Sir, require much fortitude on my part to make this declaration. It was only necessary to look into the discussions which took place at that period, and subsequently, to find a host of practical authority opposed to it in every stage, and afterwards bearing testimony to the severe pressure which it was inflicting among all ranks of persons. On a Motion of Mr. Tierney's, in 1818, for considering the expediency of repealing the Bank Restriction Act, we have it stated, that Mr. Huskisson 'adverted to the effect 'produced in this country, and indeed 'upon all the Continent of Europe, by the 'facility enjoyed by Great Britain of extending her paper currency. It was, 'like the effect,' he said, 'that had been 'found to arise from the discovery of the 'mines of America; for, by increasing the 'circulating medium over the world, to the 'extent of 40,000,000*l.*, it proportionably 'facilitated the means of barter, and gave 'a stimulus to industry.'* That gentleman, whose clear and practical understanding was undoubted, also said, "that the quantity of metallic money should be as small as possible, and the quantity of convertible paper as large as possible."† And in 1830, when the hon. member for Whitehaven made a Motion similar to his present one, Mr. Huskisson said, "He agreed with the hon. Member, in his estimation of paper credit, and paper circulation, as one of the greatest improvements of modern times."‡ Again, the confessed and recorded errors of those who originally supported the Bill of 1819, were very striking, and spoke volumes as to the false and ruinous principles on which it was founded. Mr. Ricardo, in 1819, said, 'The difficulty was only that of raising 'the currency three per cent. By withdrawing paper so as to restore the note 'to its bullion-value—an alteration, by-the-bye, of only three per cent.,—the 'House would have done all that was required.' And, 'at the end of the year, 'we should all be surprised to reflect that 'any alarm had ever prevailed at a prospect of variation of three per cent in the 'value of the circulating medium.'§ But, in 1823, this distinguished financier confessed, "He was now ready to admit, that Mr. Peel's Bill had raised the value of the currency ten per cent."‖ A great deal was said about the principles of honesty and morality—affected by the present Motion. The hon. member for Essex (Mr. Baring) was not sparing in his denunciations on this subject. Was, then, the standard of morality a moveable and convertible one to times and temptations? In

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* Hansard, xxxviii. p. 490.

† Ibid. p. 489.

‡ Hansard (new series) xxv. p. 169.

§ Hansard, xl. 743.

‖ Ibid. (new series) viii. p. 264.

1821, the hon. member for Essex made a Motion almost precisely similar to the one now before us. This was his Motion:—'That a Select Committee be appointed to 'consider the provisions of the Act, and 'to report their opinion to the House, 'whether it would be expedient to make 'any alteration in the said Act, so as to 'alleviate the pressure which its operation 'is producing, and is likely to continue to 'produce, on the various branches of public industry:' and these were his arguments: 'The more he considered this 'question, the more he felt it to be one 'not only of the utmost importance, but 'as "the" one in which were involved all 'the distresses experienced by the country, 'and their remedy. * * * He was convinced 'that the interests of the country would 'not work, that the circulation of the 'country would not move. Unless they 'did maturely and carefully reconsider 'that important Act.' Let the House remark how, in the conscience of the hon. Member, the mountains of to-day were but mole-hills a little time since. Those who now proposed a revision of this Act, must be, according to the opinion of the hon. Gentleman, fit either for Bedlam or for Newgate—they must be either mad or dishonest. But what was his opinion in 1821? Why this—'It might easily be 'proved that we had brought our standard 'above what it was in 1797, and, therefore, 'that no person need be scrupulous to 'that degree as to fear any ill conse'quences from the adoption of his propo'sition.' These reminiscences from the life of the hon. Member, were like the whole of his speech last Session, the first part of which fulminated against our morality, whilst the latter part participated in and applauded our whole aim and end. The right hon. President of the Board of Trade contended, that to assent to this question would prejudice the cause of the labouring classes. The hon. member for Essex, however, said, in the speech he had just quoted, and correctly said, 'High 'prices did not vary precisely with the 'alteration in the standard of value; but 'they were kept up by the habits, and feel'ings, and prejudices of the community. 'It was quite clear that the present rate 'of wages could not last. The labourer's 'wages must come down when his master 'could find nobody to employ him; and 'whenever that time arrived, which could 'not be very far distant, the reduction of 'wages would, no doubt, be received with 'great discontent. Reduced, however, 'the wages must be; and it was better to 'turn the attention of the labouring 'classes to the true cause of such a reduc'tion, than to endeavour to make them 'profound patriots, by declaiming upon 'Parliamentary Reform.' With regard to the effect of this Bill, in adding to incumbrances, the hon. member for Essex said:—'His opinion was, that these 'evils, alarming as they were, were 'occasioned by the alteration in our cur'rency, which he rated at not less than 'twenty-five to thirty-three per cent. In 'some instances, he should say, it had 'risen to a third, and even fifty per cent.'* These were weighty and conclusive opinions on this important subject. The hon. member for Essex was, at the time he stated these facts and opinions, practically engaged in one of the most successful and extensive concerns that ever existed in this country; and it must be matter of equal astonishment and regret to all, that such an opinion, upon such a subject, was so rejected and set at nought. If such had been the effect of that fatal Bill, and if it added thus enormously to existing obligations, something in justice ought to have been done simultaneously for the protection of those who owed money. In Scotland, in the reign of James 3rd., there was an Act passed, "That the money and gold be cryed up higher;" and which appreciated, according to the phrase of the right hon. the President of the Board of Trade, the currency about thirteen per cent; and the Act immediately following this on the Scotch Statute Book was, "for the payment of debtor and creditor," which stated—'To remove discord among the King's 'lieges betwixt the creditors and debtors, 'that are owing sums, it is statute and 'ordained, that the debtor shall pay his 'creditor with such moneys, and of the 'same price, as the money had course 'before this proclamation, and Parlia'ment, &c.' Such was the standard of plain and honest dealing in my country in 1475, and I know no good reason for departing from it in this country in 1819. He was surprised to hear the hon. member for Walsall, a practical man, state that those who had borrowed money during the restriction of cash payments had no right to complain that they were compelled to pay in hard cash, because, said the hon. Member, they were aware that they borrowed under that liability. He would remind that hon. Member, and those who thought with him, that the Bank Restriction Act, on its fourth renewal in 1798, was worded "to cease and expire one month after the signing of a definitive treaty of peace," and in no more specific terms; and the fact was, that it expired and ceased precisely eight years after that event occurred. This established pretty clearly the spirit of the enactment itself, and that its first term, as specified, was but a matter of form. But, independent of this, there was another fact which was conclusive as to the gross injustice of saddling the borrowers of 1*l.* notes—with an addition of thirty to fifty per cent on their debts; he meant the Resolution of that House in 1811, by which all holders of paper were guaranteed against any depreciation, past, present, or future, in the 1*l.* note. His object was, not to remedy what had already happened, but to stop the further progress of this great evil. The Bill of 1819, fixed a new standard of value ruinously expensive to this country; and the objection he made to the Amendment of the noble Lord was, that it would prevent the country from adopting the old national standard of silver, either conjointly with gold, or singly by itself, which he should prefer. But after all that had occurred in the debate, the hon. member for Whitehaven ought not, perhaps, to press his Motion to a division; because the question for inquiry was virtually carried, provided the House would adopt the Amendment of the noble Lord as the guiding star through the Committee; and he was disposed to accede to these terms. The question was one which could be determined only by inquiry. In making his present statement, he was not one of those, if such there were, who sacrificed their own judgment to the opinion of their constituents; he did not know the opinion of his constituents on this point, and therefore was following no other dictation than that of his own judgment. He was convinced, that we could adhere to our present system only at the price of a total decay of our commercial prosperity.

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* Mr. Baring's speech and Motion are in Hansard, vol. v. (new series) p. 91-97.

Mr. *Strutt*, although he acknowledged that there was considerable distress in the country, was nevertheless persuaded that the statements which had been made of that distress were greatly exaggerated. The continued employment of capital, or rather the increased employment of capital, in our various manufactures, convinced him of the fact, that although certainly the present period was not one of peculiar prosperity, neither was it one of peculiar depression. He was satisfied that the manufacturing and commercial interests of the country regarded with dismay the Motion of the hon. member for Whitehaven, as fraught with the greatest danger to trade, and every description of property. He perfectly agreed with the noble Lord, that the only object of the Motion was the depreciation of the currency; and he also concurred with the noble Lord, that no one could agree to the Motion who was not prepared to transfer large portions of property from one set of persons to another—from the creditors to the debtors of the country. It had been said, that the measure was justifiable in order to counteract the injustice with respect to contracts which had been perpetrated by the resumption of cash payments. But even conceding that there had been that injustice, still it should be remembered that the contracts of the present period were not the contracts of 1819. Out of 100 existing contracts, ninety-nine had been made since that period. It would be a strange mode of justice to perpetrate injustice in ninety-nine instances, for the purpose of adjusting a contract on one. The fact was, that the injustice was perpetrated by the Bank Restriction Act, and the Act of 1819 was only a return to justice; and having experienced the fatal effects of the Bank restriction, ought the House now to adopt a system which would lead to similar results? He did not impute undue motives to those from whom he differed in opinion on this subject. He had no doubt that they were convinced of the propriety of the step which they were taking, although he was at a loss to understand on what principle they were so convinced. But, entertaining the view which he did of the subject, he should feel that, if he were to concur in the Motion of the hon. member for Whitehaven, it would be the commencement of a system of confiscation and ruin. During the debates on the Reform Bill, the hon. member for Whitehaven had expressed his apprehension that the measure was fraught with revolutionary consequences, and that general confiscation would be its result. He

(Mr. Strutt) had better hopes; and he believed that he should not be disappointed, and that the present Parliament would not sanction the proposed measure of general confiscation. The country was deeply indebted to the noble Lord for the straight-forward and manly manner in which he had met the Motion; and it was his firm belief, that, by the course which the noble Lord had taken, he had succeeded in securing to himself and his Majesty's Government the increased attachment and confidence of the nation.

Mr. *Robinson* put it to the House in what situation the question would be left if the Amendment of the noble Lord was carried, and the Motion of the hon. member for Whitehaven negatived? Was it not desirable that the question should be decided, not evaded? Yet, in that case, they would be just where they were. All their time would have been wasted—all the talents of the present House, and all the experience of past Parliaments, would have been wasted, without one practical or beneficial result. He deprecated that so much, that he must trespass on the House for a few minutes. For his part, he could not discover any great difference between the opinions of the noble Lord and of the hon. member for Whitehaven, as explained by the latter last night. He thought he understood the noble Lord to say, that he had no objection to an inquiry, provided the House, in the first instance, affirmed his Amendment. In his opinion, there was nothing so puerile as to debate on the fact whether or not there was any distress in the country. If the statements of that distress had been exaggerated, yet there could be no doubt that there was a sufficient degree of distress and embarrassment to warrant the House to enter upon an inquiry into its cause, with a view, if possible, to find some means of relief. It was evident that a great majority of the House was for limiting the inquiry to that precise object; and he was convinced, that if the House were to affirm the proposition of the hon. member for Whitehaven, unaccompanied by a Resolution that they would maintain the present standard of value, the next day would present a spectacle which no man would contemplate without horror, or find terms sufficiently eloquent to describe. It was his decided conviction, that if the country meant to retain its character for good faith, it would not affirm the hon. Gentleman's proposition. He had known the hon. Gentleman long, and respected him highly; but when the hon. Gentleman said, that it was not his intention to depreciate the currency, he was at a loss to understand the hon. Gentleman's meaning. Although one-pound notes were withdrawn, there were five-pound notes, both of the Bank of England and of country Bankers, and an immense mass of mercantile paper, valuable only because it was convertible into a metallic currency. What would be the effect of the adoption of the hon. Gentleman's Motion, on this mass of paper, but depreciation? The Bank Restriction had inflicted the greatest embarrassments on the country, and the return to cash payments had also produced effects which were not contemplated by its supporters. But if errors had been committed in 1797 and 1819, was that a reason that the House of Commons were now to be called upon to commit the fatal error of unsettling the standard of value? The effect of such a step would be most injurious on all our relations with foreign states. He believed, that he should not be wrong in asserting that measures might be devised, short of a breach of national faith, to overcome our difficulties and restore prosperity. As to an inquiry into the distress of the people, he could hardly support such a proposition — for it would last the whole Session; but an inquiry—distress being admitted—into safe and judicious remedies, he would willingly vote for. Mere Resolutions did not alter the nature of things, or enable the people to pay taxes, and live in something like decency and comfort. The House should not reject such a Motion on the miserable plea of expediency, or refuse to legislate, simply because they were afraid or unwilling. In 1822 the present Lord Chancellor brought forward a Motion on the distress of the country, in which he stated that common remedies would do no good, but that vigorous measures must be resorted to. 'His decided opinion upon the subject was, that where the pressure was 'so great, and the interest so mighty—'for the very existence of the State was 'bound up in the prosperity of the land—'the country had only one limit to relief—'the making that relief decidedly effectual; 'that if one measure of reduction would 'not do, recourse must be had to another, 'and from thence to another; and that 'if all reductions were insufficient, the 'country must prepare for other measures, 'for measures only to be justified by a 'paramount unreasoning necessity.' Such were the words of the noble individual who now sat so very easily, though he did not mean indifferently, on the Woolsack. Again, he said, 'If economy was not 'found effectual, Parliament was bound to 'do that which would be effectual; for, 'at all events and all hazards, it was their 'duty to save the State. God forbid, that 'any man should even whisper such an 'expedient as that, from which every well-'constituted mind must recoil—the com-'pounding with the public creditor, or the 'tampering with the currency—while Par-'liament possessed the power of relieving 'the existing distress by a diminution 'of taxation, and by the enforcement of 'economy.'* The only fault he had to find with the present Ministers—for he was sure they were anxious to do their duty and relieve the people—was, that their measures were not sufficiently determined—that they did not go direct to the point. They, he was satisfied, must be of a much more vigorous character, to accomplish any substantial and permanent good. He did not place any faith in the arguments of the right hon. member for Manchester (Mr. Poulett Thomson), and of the hon. member for London (Mr. Grote), that, because tea and other excisable articles had increased in consumption, the comforts of the people had been augmented. In his opinion, it could only be taken as a change in the habits of the people, that instead of having the good old roast beef, they used articles of a less substantial and less strengthening character. He trusted the Resolution and the Amendment would be embodied in such a way as to lead to an inquiry; for they must all agree, that the state of the productive classes was such—their distress was so apparent—as to justify and call for it.

Sir *Henry Parnell* would shortly state the grounds on which he should give his vote on the Motion of the hon. member for Whitehaven. He had paid great attention to the speech of the hon. Member to discover what his precise plan was, and the result he had come to was, to consider it in the same point of view with his noble friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer—namely, as a plan for lowering the standard of value of the country. The hon. Member said, he desired a relaxation of the currency, and had denied that he sought for a depreciation of it; but to him there appeared to be no difference between his relaxation and a positive depreciation. What he meant by relaxation might be ascertained by referring to what he considered the good effects of it. He had taken the period when the relaxation was the greatest, as that when the prosperity of the country was the greatest—namely, during the war; but then prices were the highest, and, at the same time, the currency the most depreciated; so that, in point of fact, it was clear that depreciation was the real object of the hon. Member. By referring again to the period which the hon. Member considered to be one of the greatest distress, he assigned as the cause of the distress the restored value of the currency, and thus again showed his remedy for all distress was depreciation. In point of fact, what the hon. Member desired was to lower the standard of value—it was to require that the sovereign which now passed for 20*s*. should hereafter pass for 25*s*. But when this came to be fully understood out of doors, as it, no doubt, soon would be, the public would see nothing in the plan of the hon. Member that would be productive of any other result than great national injury. It was for these reasons he would give his vote against the Motion of the hon. Member; but, in doing so, he wished to be understood, he was by no means opposed to inquiry into the state of the country. He was anxious, on the contrary, that inquiry should take place, and he was sorry his noble friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had not proposed, on the present occasion, that Committees should be appointed to make this inquiry. He did not mean an inquiry into all those subjects which had been introduced into discussion in this debate, but a practical inquiry into the state of trade, and into the condition of the working classes. He thought an inquiry into the state of trade would not only be attended with the good effect of ascertaining to what extent distress really existed; but into that of showing means by which the interests of it might be promoted. He conceived it would lead to the taking off of many restrictions which now fettered it. With respect to the working class, an inquiry into the wages and the expenses of this class would produce a great deal of useful information; and, besides leading to measures for the improvement of its condition, would make it known how far distress really existed. He wished further to make some observations on a subject which had been so frequently mentioned in the course of the debate—namely, the establishing of a double standard. He conceived a great deal of misapprehension prevailed on this point. If the facts of the case were examined, it would be found that every attempt which had been made in this country, and every other country, to have a double standard, had failed. We had a double standard in this country up to the year 1816; but what was the state of the silver coin? No legal coin existed. The cause was, that the Mint prices of gold and silver were so adjusted, that silver coin could not be kept in circulation; but if the relative value should be ever so properly adjusted in the first instance, it was impossible the two metals could continue in circulation, because the value of both was liable to fluctuation; and when any such fluctuation took place, then one of the metals would be of more value in bullion than in coin, and would be melted. There had been much error in the course of this debate, in assuming that silver had been the standard of value in this country. It had been so nominally, but in reality it was held by all the best authorities, that, in point of fact, during the whole of the last century, gold was the standard. This was proved to be the case by the reduction of the value of the guinea, in 1717, from 21*s.* 6*d.* to 21*s.* being followed by a reduction in the price of gold to the same amount. The right hon. Member concluded by saying, that the subject was so exhausted by preceding speakers, and the views entertained upon it, which were in conformity with his own, had been so ably explained and supported, that he would not go over the same ground, but content himself by declaring, that he knew of no greater calamity that could befal this country than making any alteration in the long-established standard of the value of its money.

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* Hansard, (new series.) vi. p. 253—254.

Mr. *Lambert* said, it was impossible to deny, that, since the alteration in the monetary system, the distress of the country had greatly increased. It had, in fact, been progressive, and the only part of the United Kingdom that it had not yet reached was Scotland. He was prepared to prove, that the distress had so completely originated with the measure for changing the monetary system, that it was to be traced to the preparation by the Bank of England for putting that measure in force. He had not wished to intrude upon the time of the House, but, after what he had heard stated respecting the landlords, he could not consent to be silent. He spoke as one who had suffered, and most severely, from the present system; and, although he pretended only to be able to deal with the subject as a plain country Gentleman, still he trusted for the indulgence of the House. Obloquy had often been heaped upon the landlords. It had been said, that they were selfish and hard-hearted, and that their obduracy had caused the present distress. In that there was no truth. The landlords were the victims of gross injustice. More than any other class in the community they had suffered from the change in the monetary system. He would put this case:—A man in England realised by his exertions in commerce, in an honourable, fair, and open manner—in a way, in fact, which, while it added to his own individual wealth, increased the fame and the commercial character and power of his country, and assisted in carrying it to an unprecedented height of grandeur—well, a merchant by conduct so honourable realised 60,000*l.*, and that sum he advanced on mortgage on an estate of four times its value. Doing so, he advanced the money on the clear and explicit understanding that it was equal in value to one-fourth of the whole property upon which it was lent. The arrangement was made; and then came an Act of Parliament which changed the value of money, and made that which was worth one-fourth of the property equal, in point of fact, as to annual income, to the whole of it. And that was called wisdom and justice, but, above all, it was called, and loudly, by the name of honesty. The House would bear in mind, that the burthen so unjustly and so dishonestly thrown upon the landlord was not confined to the increased value of the money which had been lent. It was felt, and severely, in the reduction of rents. He was confident he did not overstate the case when he said, that there had been a reduction in rents from thirty to fifty per cent. It might be said, that, in many instances, the reduction was voluntary. He believed that to be the fact. But, concluding it were so, however generous in intentions, it was, in fact, only a wise step, which must have been adopted from necessity had it not been taken from some other motive. In England, it was true, the distress had not been felt at so early a period by the landlords as in Ireland. In England tenants had in general some capital at the period of the alteration in the currency, and the consequence was, that they suffered together with the landlords, and the amount of suffering being divided between two parties, it was not so severely felt by the landlord. In Ireland, however, the case was different. There the tenant had little or no capital, and the whole evil had been borne by the landlord. Nor was that the only hardship the landlords in Ireland had to complain of. They had not only to reduce their rents, and to pay the mortgage in a greatly increased value, but they had also to bear all the odium and all the obloquy consequent upon the measures they were compelled to adopt to meet such a state of things. And yet there were to be found people who argued that a gross and ruinous injustice had not been done to the landlords. Why, suppose three quarters of wheat were represented by 4*l.*, if 2*l.* of the 4*l.* were withdrawn, surely 2*l.* would then represent the three quarters, as the 4*l.* had done. Now the landlords made bargains with the capitalist under the first arrangement, and, therefore, if the second arrangement were adopted, it must be plain that immense advantages would be conferred on the capitalist, to the prejudice, nay, plunder, of the landlord. And that had actually been the case. If a man borrowed 2*l.* it was preposterous injustice to make him pay what was equal to 4*l.* for the 2*l.* he borrowed. But it had been the habit out of doors, and he thought, too, occasionally within the House, to hold up the landlords to odium and obloquy. From such a charge, as a landlord, he shrunk not, but he repelled it with scorn and loathing, for in his conscience he felt that it was not merited. But landlords as a class were to be injured, and, therefore, it was in accordance with rule to blacken their characters, and to hold them up to popular detestation—to paint them as the authors of evils of which they were, in fact, the earliest and the most suffering victims. So with bankers. When they were to be injured an outcry was raised against them. Crimes were attributed to them which they knew of only from the suffering they had occasioned to themselves, and after having been despoiled of their property they were traduced as the promoters of the ruin. He was extremely anxious not to weary the House, but he must trespass on its attention while he alluded to one case in proof of the facility with which charges against the Irish landlords obtained credit. He did not deny, that many acts of oppression by landlords might be quoted. What class was free from such a stigma? Power induced tyranny in some minds, and must ever do so while human nature remained as it had hitherto been constituted. But having made that admission, he must repeat, that charges were made against Irish landlords, and obtained credit, which were wholly devoid of truth. The case he had alluded to was a strong one. It was stated in a work upon the necessity of introducing Poor-laws into Ireland. With the general principles advocated in the book he cordially concurred; but he knew that the statement he had referred to, and which was made to excite feelings adverse to leaving the tenant or the poor at all at the mercy of the landlords, was false. The statement was, that a man condemned to death in Wexford for murder had made a dying declaration to the effect that he was the murderer; that he had been driven to the commission of crime by a bad landlord; for that, after his father had grown grey upon the estate as the tenant of the holding he had had, he had been dispossessed of it, and cast adrift upon the world, without house or home or the means of existence. Now, in that statement there was not one word of truth. He knew the facts of the case, and, as it was stated, they were totally misrepresented. The landlord in question had actually forgiven the delinquent five years of rent. Moreover, after so doing, he suffered him still to continue his tenant for the same property. But he found that, at the end of a year and a half, he could again get no rent whatever; and he then said to the man, "take all you have, everything that belongs to you, and I will not require from you any rent, but go your ways, and let me have my premises." And what was the rent agreed for? Actually less than 9*s.* per acre of fair arable land. He knew the landlord.

He was a clergyman of the Established Church. He resided in England, and a more humane, generous, and considerate man to the poor was no where to be found. But the scandal was against the landlord, and the people had not stopped to ask if it were true. But, when they heard of all the distress and oppression proceeding from the landlords, he asked, how did that appear? Where was the proof of it to be found? If he went into a neighbourhood and found the old antiquated buildings giving place to new and magnificent structures, with their Turkish minarets, or their Grecian colonnades, and he inquired, whose property is this? the reply invariably was, "Oh! the old landlord is gone; a new one has possession;" and, generally speaking, the very name of the new possession at once enabled him to guess at the source from which he derived his means. But some said the distress of the landlords was occasioned by their own extravagance. The assertion was monstrous upon the face of it. Was it to be believed, that all at once men, who could trace the possession of the property they now held to Norman, and even to Saxon, ancestors had been seized with a demon-like spirit of destructive absurdity that involved themselves and all about them in ruin and misery? Was it not far more reasonable to attribute such conduct to some powerful and irresistible force acting upon its victims? The distress and the misery had gone on increasing and increasing from the first step taken towards making the alteration of the currency up to the present moment. It was true there had been periods of recovery. The State physician was in attendance, but not always practising depletion. When he found that his victim writhed too severely, and threatened to expire, then the State physician administered relief; but he administered it only in order that when the patient had acquired renewed strength, the work of prostration might be renewed. At some of the observations which had fallen from the right hon. Baronet, the member for Tamworth, he was greatly astonished. The right hon. Baronet had complained that the report of the Bullion Committee had been adopted. Why, of course it had. It was owing to the proceedings of that Committee the Bank began its preparations. The feeling of the House was seen by the Bank, and it acted accordingly. But there was another part of the speech of the right hon. Baronet that was so utterly inconsistent with his known principles, and oft-repeated views, and high character, that but for those considerations, he should have concluded that when the right hon. Baronet appealed as he did to the labouring classes, as opposed to the supporters of his motion, his object was to excite a servile war. The House would remember that he had distinctly stated, not that he accused the right hon. Baronet of any intention to excite a servile war, but that, had a stranger spoken out as the right hon. Baronet did, one whose principles and whose wishes could be judged of only by that speech, he would have come to that conclusion. Another point in the speech of the right hon. Baronet had forcibly struck him. The right hon. Baronet had quoted from the writings of that great man, Mr. Burke. He was proud to hear him quote from such an authority; but it would have been still more satisfactory if the right hon. Gentleman had quoted from one who upon this subject was a still greater authority, and that was the right hon. Baronet's own father. From the hour the change was projected, up to the period of his death, that able, successful, and highly respected man was not only opposed to the change, but declared it to be one of great and unnecessary injustice. The hon. member for Essex (Mr. Baring) had made some propositions, and they were really of such a character that he would take no objection to them. He should like greatly to see them adopted. Indeed he hoped, if the hon. Gentleman did not himself bring forward his propositions as a substantive motion, that some other hon. Member would do so. But the hon. member for Essex had made, and for the supporters of the Motion rather an awkward allusion to what had been done in Turkey. It appeared that in Turkey, the consequence of depreciation was, that a piastre which was of the value of 3*s*. was reduced to 3*d*. Now that was certainly a bad case for depreciation, but still the conduct of the Grand Vizier had not been quite so unjust as the conduct in England. If he had depreciated he had never been guilty of the double injustice of depreciating and then increasing the value of the currency. Had the Grand Vizier ventured on the experiment, in all probability his head would have been made to answer for it, and the penalty would have been demanded according to the most approved forms of the political economists of Turkey. The House had been told as an argument against the motion, and indeed against all alterations of the standard of value, that if such an alteration was made, the necessary consequence would be, that the gold would leave the country for parts where the gold standard existed. In reply to that he said, then it must travel far. Was it in France that a gold standard would be found? In Germany? In Russia? Or in any country in Europe? No; for none such existed. Another argument used against the Motion was, that it was unnecessary, for there was, in reality, but little distress in England. He could conceive that those who were cradled in luxury, and from their infancy had all the enjoyments and all the adulation which wealth could purchase, should in the midst of splendor exclaim, "Oh! there can be no distress." But to the man who looked abroad and judged for himself there was distress, gigantic, appalling, intolerable distress, stalking through the land. Every day brought that distress nearer in contact with wealth; and unless some means, powerful means, were speedily taken to arrest its progress, it would soon have destroyed the classes upon which it was now feeding, and then the country would exhibit the spectacle of a few millionaries surrounded by starving multitudes. There would no longer be disputations as to the amount or career of the distress, but when too late the truth would be acknowledged in the midst of general ruin. Let any man trace what had passed under his own experience, and who would deny, that the distress had gone on increasing? He was old enough to remember when in England, happy, free, industrious England, if a young industrious man took to himself a wife, he did so with the certainty that his own labour would provide for himself, his partner, and his offspring a maintenance. The case was now altered. When he heard hon. Members talking of over-population, and the consequent necessity of emigration, he really could not contain his feelings of indignation. Was it not monstrous to hear some wealthy philosophers raising up their voices for emigration, and, instead of mending the distressed condition of the nation, telling the starving multitude around them, "Go perish and starve elsewhere; in your native land you are superabundant, and must be expelled"! They had been told in more quarters than one, that during the time of the high prices, the country was enjoying a fictitious prosperity. Was there ever such an argument addressed to a famishing population? It was rather an odd way to stop the mouths of the people by telling them "We will not relieve your distress by the means you ask, because, though you would enjoy prosperity, you would be feeding on fictitious bacon, clothed in fictitious clothes, and housed in air-built castles." It was somewhat amusing also to consider the manner in which the Motion had been met by Ministers. On a former evening, when the hon. member for Birmingham proposed an inquiry into the general causes of distress, he was met on the part of Government by the assertion that his proposition was far too general, and that the inquiry he asked for offered no hopes of a satisfactory termination. After that assertion it was only natural to suppose, that a motion for inquiry into one of the elements constituting the distress of the people would at once be taken up by the Ministers, and carried as a matter of course. What, however, was the case? A specific motion for an inquiry into the effect of the currency on the condition of the people was made, and Ministers, without denying the possibility that the nature of the currency in force might tend in producing the evil under which the country laboured, met it with a declaration, that that specific question was precisely the element which should not be touched upon. Such conduct could only be likened to that of a Coroner who should tell a Jury in a case of murder not to examine any evidence tending to criminate a particular individual who was generally supposed to be the murderer. The supporters of the motion for inquiry had been accused of an intention of confiscation and plunder. Now he thought it very hard that their own statements, expressly denying any such intention, should not be deemed worthy of the slightest credence. Certainly, from that very Ministry, who had so often raised up their indignant voices when, last year, upon the discussion of an important measure, they were on all sides assailed with the cry of, "You mean Reform, you say, but we know you mean revolution," claiming, and justly claiming, to have their own words to the contrary deemed worthy of belief,—it was rather singular to hear their intentions branded with the insinuation of confiscation and spoliation. In conclusion, the hon. Member earnestly called upon the House not to depreciate the character of the first Reformed Parliament by putting the extinguisher on all hopes of inquiry into the causes of that distress under which the country laboured. The people were anxious and inclined to think well of the present House of Commons; but if that House, at the dictation of the Ministers, united in stifling all efforts to remedy their wrongs, their present feeling in their favour would speedily turn to hatred and contempt.

Mr. *Walter* began by complimenting the Ministers on the resolute and decided manner in which the ill-judged proposition of the hon. member for Whitehaven had been met by them. He thought, that the Reform Bill itself was hardly of greater moment, or the firmness and good sense displayed on that occasion by his Majesty's Government more conspicuous. With reference to preceding speakers, it was impossible to forget the powerful and convincing speech of the right hon. Baronet who had closed the preceding night's debate, and who, as he unanswerably showed, had been most unjustly attacked, in having his celebrated measure of 1819 made the subject of so much obloquy. If even that right hon. Gentleman was in error on that occasion, he was in error with all those who possessed the highest character as statesmen: he was prospectively sanctioned by repeated resolutions of that House, by the terms on which every loan had been raised, and by the original Bank Restriction Act itself; all of which contemplated, and pledged the Legislature to a direct resumption of cash payments at the end of the war. The bill of 1819 had, indeed, been called Mr. Peel's Bill; but did he stand alone in his advocacy of it? Had not his opinion of the necessity of reverting to cash payments been supported throughout the whole period of their suspension by all the most eminent men existing in the country—by Mr. Fox, Mr. Pitt, and by all persons constituting the great mass of intellect in the country? Of those eminent persons Lord Granville alone remained; and had they not his published opinion, that we never could have any security as to our finances till we returned to cash payments, and bank paper became convertible into gold at the will of the holder? If the opinion were erroneous, it was the error of able men; but he did not believe it was an error; for, however severe might have been the recent pressure, we had had no shocks or violent concussions like that of 1825; and as to the pressure, severe, though it was allowed to be, he denied that it had resulted exclusively from the return to cash payments. The evidence of facts contradicted that supposition; for if the present state of the currency had created the distress, it would have affected all articles of sale alike; whereas the pressure upon them had been by no means equal or similar. Take cotton, for instance; that article was at a very low rate; but as to the chief article of human subsistence, corn, corn was even now at as high a price as when the bill for the resumption of cash payments came into operation, and had even been much higher. The average price of wheat in the five years preceding 1825 was 57*s.* a-quarter; in the five years following, 62*s.*; and, in 1830, 64*s.* Now, corn and cotton were paid for in the same currency; and, indeed, the prices of articles varied in almost every possible degree, which could not be the case if the currency were the sole cause of generally low prices. Cotton had fallen from 20*d.* to 6*d.* a-pound; but who were the sufferers by that? The Americans, the growers; not the English, the purchasers. The truth was, that all the articles of British manufacture had fallen in the general market, and would have fallen, whatever had been the material of our currency, from the immense, unexampled, and increasing competition to which they had been exposed since the war, and which they had not before experienced. There was not a single article of British industry which had not met a severe rivalry, and consequent depreciation, in every foreign market. To that cause, and the advancement of machinery, ought the member for Whitehaven, and those who agreed with him, to ascribe the distress, rather than to the currency. The present attempt to return to paper payments obviously rested on no ground whatever of reason; and if they came to authority, the authority of great names and of reputation for constitutional knowledge, that he had shown to be altogether in favour of the return to, and inviolable preservation of, cash payments. Unless, then, it were wished to see renewed the bubble schemes and dishonest projects of

1825, Parliament would not again tamper with the currency. There was enough of business before the House without re-embarking in such a sea of troubles.

Sir *Charles Burrell* said, that he and those with whom he acted, in reference to this question, did not seek anything beyond a currency convertible into gold. He hoped it was scarcely necessary for him to assure the House, that no project so inexpedient and so unjust could have ever entered their minds, as a change in the currency to the extent which some Gentlemen imagined. There was no intention nor desire on the part of those who supported the Motion to issue paper to any mischievous extent, or under such arrangements as would endanger the property of persons as it had been endangered formerly upon the failure of private bankers. For his own part, all he desired was to carry into effect the plan of the late Sir Robert Peel—a man whose memory was cherished and respected by every man who knew him. The late Sir Robert Peel's plan was, that private bankers should place a certain sum of money—say 20,000*l.* or any given sum—in the hands of Government Commissioners, and that the persons making such a deposit should be entitled to the interest, and also be permitted to issue notes equal in amount to the deposit. This plan would allow the banker to carry on a profitable business, and it would afford the holder of private bankers' notes an ample security in the deposit standing in the names of Government Commissioners. This was the opinion of a practical man. The present right hon. Baronet of the same name entertained a different opinion. He begged the House, however, to recollect that the late Sir Robert Peel had made a large fortune, whilst the present right hon. Baronet was only spending one. Much was said in approval of the present coinage. The House had been told repeatedly that the present system of coinage worked well; but did the country know what the House paid for it? He believed the Duke of Wellington had stated, that the amount of metallic currency in circulation was 20,000,000*l.* Now, taking that sum as the amount, if Gentlemen would take the trouble of calculating, they would find that the additional expense, and therefore the additional taxation, imposed on the country by such an amount of coin, amounted to 1,400,000*l.* per annum. Why we should keep up so large an amount of metal in circulation, at an enormous expense, in opposition to the system pursued in most of the other countries of Europe, he could not conceive. He would only notice the relative circumstances of this country and Russia, with respect to its metallic circulation. Russia had paper rubles and silver rubles. The silver rubles were not a legal tender in that country, but the paper rubles were. Russia had scarcely any other circulation but paper, and yet that country was prosperous, and every nation in Europe trembled at her power. He would not detain the House, but he begged leave to read, as an illustration of his opinions, the late Sir Robert Peel's comparison between a restricted and an abundant circulation, with a view to national prosperity—'A restricted circulation never fails to create every evil 'which can afflict an industrious people. 'Scarcity of money, unpurchased manufactures, deficiency of employment, unpaid rents, dejected agriculture, and 'unproductive commerce—these are the 'mischiefs which necessarily distress the 'individual and embarrass the community, 'whilst its circulation is deficient; and in 'our peculiar circumstances these mischiefs 'are greatly aggravated by the fearful 'load of taxes by which we are oppressed. 'When money, on the other hand, becomes abundant, it may always be procured at a moderate interest; bills of 'exchange, and other private securities are 'readily discounted; and every individual 'who has property or credit is accommodated with loans according to his necessities. With an abundant circulation, 'ingenuity is put to a stretch, in order to 'find the means of subsistence — the 'manufacturers are all occupied — our 'merchants send out additional adventures '—the ship-owners have freights at their 'command—the produce of the husbandman is consumed by a busy people—'rents are more easily paid—and taxes are 'more readily collected. Such are the 'benefits resulting to individuals, and to 'the State from an abundant circulation. 'It may occasion some inconveniences, 'but these can be sufficiently obviated by 'judicious regulations.'

Mr. *Morrison*, being strongly impressed with the belief, that to a tampering with the currency in past years much of the present distress of the country was attributable, expressed his intention of voting against the Motion of the hon. member for Whitehaven. They all remembered what had been the effect of some of the changes that had been made in our currency; and if they were now to go back to the former system, it would bring about such a panic as that of 1825, and he must be a bold man who could say, that a nation could bear such a change more than once. From the opportunities he had had of judging the sentiments of commercial men on the subject of the Motion, his belief was, that it was regarded as one which it would be improper for Parliament seriously to entertain. The general impression as to the object of the Motion was, that the standard of the country was to be lowered, and hence he was assured arose the opposition made to it. If it were thought, that Government intended to support the proposition, there would, before now, have been remonstrances against it from all the commercial and manufacturing classes. That the circulation of the country was sufficient for all its wants was proved by the fact of the large number of deposits in the banks. Such deposits, and to so large an amount, would not be left if the circulation were less than the wants of the country required. He had ascertained from various parts of the country that the lawyers generally had clients with plenty of money to advance upon security, but the difficulty was to find any means of employing capital to advantage. It was his opinion, that the circulation, so far from being scanty, was, if anything, too abundant, as the state of the money market at the present moment proved. The Bank of England had been, in many instances, doing all in its power to force its notes into circulation; but as fast as they went out they returned again in the form of deposits. The hon. Member by whom the present Motion was submitted to the House seemed to say, that his chief object was the relief of the landed interest; but a relief to that class could never be effected in the manner whichhe contemplated otherwise than by a depreciation of the standard of value. What was peculiar in the case was, that the persons who were ready to advance money were generally of the humbler classes, whose capitals did not exceed 1,000*l.* But he was convinced, that the landowners and farmers did not want the measure proposed, any more than the manufacturers and merchants. The hon. member for Essex (Mr. Baring) had denied this with respect to Essex, but he begged leave to remind the House, that that county had long been represented by a Gentleman of property in it, whose views of the currency were peculiar; and, probably, when the hon. member for North Essex (Mr. Baring) said, that he had received communications from the county in favour of the alteration of the currency, he might have suspected that such communications might have come from the enemy's camp. He could speak from a personal knowledge of the counties around Essex, and could say, that the people cared nothing about Mr. Attwood's Motion. All they wanted was a reduction of taxes, economy in every branch of expenditure, and an abolition of sinecures, pensions, and useless places. He believed, that the nature of business in this country was so complex, that it depended on such numerous causes and accidents, and was connected with such innumerable interests and such a diversity of classes, that it might be said, that at any time of prosperity there existed much of distress, whilst during the worst periods of distress it would not be difficult to find out great masses of prosperity. Much greater distress, if one might judge from the number of bankruptcies, had existed in the years of greatest depreciation—those from 1811 to 1814, the years of depreciation, which the hon. member for Whitehaven called years of prosperity. He should say, that the great body of the people were not now in such distress as they were then. He believed, that the distress existed only among the middle classes of the community. When the hon. member for Wexford talked of the distresses being produced by the Bill of 1819, he should likewise take into consideration the many who had been ruined by the tampering with the currency before that period. The previous alterations of the currency had most materially affected the poor, and nothing that could be done by the House with respect to the currency could afford them any relief. When any class was distressed, Government had always been called upon for an issue of paper; and Lord Liverpool having issued 4,500,000*l.* in 1823 for the relief of the agricultural classes was, he believed, the ground on which so many now hoped, that Ministers would consent to an increase of the currency. From 1754, the price of agricultural produce had increased, and that class of the community had nothing to complain of. If the hon. member for Whitehaven meant that his plan should only have the effect of lowering the interest on the funds, it would be much more honourable and fair to directly tax the funds than to derange all the contracts between man and man merely to attain that object. With respect to the question which had been mooted of the co-existence of a silver and gold standard, he would say, that he should have no objection to such a scheme, provided the standards could be made of exactly equal value. He, however, doubted whether equalization could be effected on the whole. He contended that a reduction of taxes and general economy, were the measures which would afford the country a much greater extent of relief, than any alteration in the currency.

Sir *John Wrottesley*, who, on rising, was interrupted by cries of "Question," said, he had been too long a Member of that House to be put down by such cries, and those who would not hear him might depend upon it that they should hear nobody else till he had spoken. It was his decided opinion, that the present Motion was substantially to inquire into the distress of the country; and that that distress existed might be gathered from what had fallen from the last speaker, and from several Returns which had been laid upon the Table of that House. The conclusions which had been drawn by the right hon. the Vice President of the Board of Trade relative to the diminution, or rather to the non-existence of distress were most incorrect. That right hon. Gentleman had alluded to the Poor-rates of Birmingham, from which he had no returns; but he could take upon himself to say, that at Wolverhampton the case was directly the reverse. The poor-rates had been doubled since 1824, and it was impossible that Wolverhampton could be thus suffering, and Birmingham be prosperous. He stated this fact on the authority of the gentleman who had been sent there as a Commissioner to inquire into the Poor-laws, and he stated, that the administration of the poor there was well managed. Nevertheless the Poor-rates had doubled; that surely was an evidence of prosperity in that industrious community. The right hon. Gentleman had also referred to the increase of the tolls on the Birmingham Canal; but the old Birmingham Canal had increased its revenue, not from any increase of trade, but on account of nearly half a million of money having been laid out on improvements; and the increased receipts by the Worcester and Birmingham Canal proprietors, arose entirely from the city of Gloucester having been opened as a port. Other canal shares were known to be depreciated, and he could name cases where shares had fallen from 1,200*l.* to 650*l.*, whilst in another case shares which had been worth 160*l.* each had fallen to 85*l.* In the same proportion had fallen the value of lands, machinery, and of every species of saleable property. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Poulett Thomson), therefore, was erroneous in his statements. There never had been a period in which the value of property had been so depreciated as between the years 1800 and the present time. He demanded an inquiry into the cause of this. He believed, that Government had done all in its power to reduce expenditure, and had reduced it as much as possible, for it had been brought down from 19,000,000*l.* to 14,000,000*l.* since the peace; and it was not therefore extraordinary that the people should demand an inquiry why the distresses still continued. He denied, that he had any wish to alter the standard of the currency. What was the meaning of the word "standard?" Could any Gentleman who heard him, say what was the standard value of the 1*l.* sterling? This question had been put to Sir Matthew Hale, when disputes had arisen respecting the value of fines in the Exchequer, and that great Judge, with all his antiquarian knowledge, could not answer it with any certainty, or even decide what was the meaning of the word sterling. Legally the pound sterling was a pound of silver. What was a standard but a fluctuating point? The value of money was for ever varying, and had varied in this country many times between the year 1792 and the present period. The hon. Member then proceeded to read several tables, showing the fluctuations in the currency, which, he said, showed, that throughout the various alterations which had been made for the better or worse, it had always occurred, that the Government had produced a favourable alteration just before each dissolution, so as to please the people at a time when new Representatives were to be chosen. Among other similar instances, the hon. Member stated, that in 1816 and 1817 there had existed the greatest distress, owing to the unfavourable state of the circulation; but, in 1818, just before Parliament was dissolved, Government had contrived to produce an additional issue of 3,000,000 of bank notes, which was of course intended as a bolstering up of a fictitious state of prosperity. This fully appeared by the fact, that after the Parliament had been returned, Government brought the circulation down again, and in 1822 the circulation was brought down so low, that the whole country combined in sending up petitions for relief from their distresses. In 1823, the Bank of England lent 1,400,000*l.* on mortgage, which served, with other advances, to bring down interest, from five per cent to four, and many were ruined in consequence. To this might also be attributed all the speculations of 1824, and the panic and ruin of 1825. Had he not a right, therefore, to attribute much mischief to the transactions of the Bank of England? He brought no charge against the Bank particularly, as it was proved, that it had become sensible of its error, meaning only to point out the effects it produced. This country was the great mart of the exchanges, and it must be affected as long as a gold circulation was maintained by the fluctuations of every country in Europe. What he wished, was, to contract the circulation which was dependent on foreign countries, in order to avoid such fatal fluctuations and derangements of the circulation. He was therefore very anxious for the appointment of the proposed Committee; and what he particularly wished that Committee to inquire into would be, the question, whether there could not be such an adjustment of the one-pound note circulation as to prevent the gold from going out of the country. As it was, the farmer was called upon to pay two quarters of corn for the one which he had formerly received. He would readily vote for the Committee; which might first inquire into the general distress, might next ascertain the connection between that and the monetary system, and might afterwards inquire into effects of the various changes in that system in the different classes of the country. The Committee might examine auctioneers, surveyors, and others concerned in the transfer of property, and the facts they would communicate would be far better than all the theories put together. He could not vote for the Motion of his noble friend, because it appeared to him dangerous to place on the records of the House a Resolution, that the standard was not to be depreciated when, in case of a war ensuing, that might be a necessary measure.

Mr. *John Smith* was rather surprised at many of the arguments he had heard. The hon. Baronet had spoken of the fall of profits of canals as a criterion of distress; but the public funds betrayed no symptom of that disease. Had the three per cents fallen? They were as marketable as ever; and many people desired to have them. Without meaning to throw any imputations on any hon. Members, he must say, that he doubted many of the stories of distress which had been told the House. He had heard, on what he was told was good authority, though he did not know the Gentleman, that all the population of Manchester engaged in the spinning business got, including men, women, and children, 10*s.* a-week wages. He was not particularly acquainted with Oldham, but he believed, that the Poor-rates in that district were remarkably low. What he, however, chiefly rose to say was this:—He was as sure, as that the sun would rise to-morrow, that if the issue of small notes was allowed, there would be again a panic. He was, in 1825, Chairman of the Committee of Bankers, and in that capacity had frequently to wait upon the Bank of England with persons soliciting relief, and he had a good opportunity of knowing the circumstances of many persons; and he could assure the House, that many honest and industrious men, who had then been obliged to make great sacrifices, had struggled on for years afterwards, but were in the end ruined in consequence of the shock they then received. He knew certainly, that the one-pound notes then found were of great use; but the Bank did not want them for itself; it could have paid all demands on it without them, but they were of use to lend to others. He knew that the Bank of England then lent millions, and that many of those who borrowed notes carried them to the Bank in half an hour and demanded specie for them. Another panic, not less than that of 1825, must ensue from issuing small notes. If the Bank of England were to suspend its payments, all the bankers of England would be ruined; and what then would be the state of the country? All the manufacturers were paid in the notes of the country bankers; and if they were ruined, he put it to the House if society could go on? No; there would be one wide scene of devastation, misery, and civil war. He admitted the honesty of the intentions of those who supported the Motion, but he, for one, protested against it; and he trusted the House would not forget its sacred duty, and would preserve the prosperity, the interest, the honour, and the integrity, of the country.

Mr. *Matthias Attwood* rose to reply, The hon. Gentleman who had just spoken sounded the same alarm when it was proposed to appoint a Committee on the subject of the currency a few years back. He had come down every day to the Committee upon the Bank Charter, predicting ruin to credit from their inquiries; but none of the consequences which he had foretold came to pass, and there was no reason to believe, that his present alarm had any other foundation than his own timidity. Those Members who voted for the Motion would pledge themselves to nothing but inquiry, and might afterwards support the proposition of the noble Lord (Lord Althorp) without inconsistency. The ground upon which he supported his Motion was, that distress existed, that it was connected with their monetary system, and that no inquiry could be complete which did not embrace inquiry into that system. He had been charged by the noble Lord with bringing forward a Motion which carried with it a depreciation of the currency; but he absolutely denied the justice of the noble Lord's inference as to the tendency of his Resolution. Those who made that charge had no authority from his words, for making it. He had reason, therefore, to complain that the whole arguments of the noble Lord (Lord Althorp) and other speakers, had all been directed against his speech, and against the Motion, on that fallacious inference. The Resolution of the noble Lord went to pledge the House not to lower the standard of value. But why all his horror against lowering it, when the standard had been successively raised at several periods, without exciting any such horror, though that was as dishonest towards the industrious classes as lowering it could possibly be towards those who lived on fixed incomes. It had been raised beyond the old standard of 1795. It had been raised, as the hon. member for Essex admitted, more than fifty per cent above that of 1815; and it would have been desirable, therefore, that the noble Lord should have called on the House to pledge itself that it would not raise the standard any further; so that the people might have had some guarantee against a further rise, and might have been no longer the victims of such legislation. It was objected to his Motion that it led to some vague and undefined danger. There could be no impropriety in all those who believed distress existed voting for his Motion, however they might differ in politics. One-pound notes now formed the circulation of Ireland and Scotland; and, if such a circulation must in this country lead to convulsion, the subject on that account alone was worth consideration. The noble Lord had admitted, in his speech, that he would not object to silver coined into 60*s.* as a standard, but he would object to it coined into 62*s.*; but 60*s.* was depreciation. The noble Lord, therefore, who was so indignant about depreciation, and talked about dishonesty, had no objection to let the 100*l.* be written down 98*l.* 10*s.*; but to write it down 95*l.* was dishonest, was everything that was bad. He could not understand such bastard integrity as that. That might be keeping faith with the public creditor, but it was by paying 98*l.* 10*s.* instead of 100*l.*

Lord *Althorp* explained that he had said he would only consent to silver as a standard so coined, if it were not depreciation; and if it were depreciation he would not consent to it.

Mr. *Attwood* accepted the noble Lord's emendation; but he could assure him that silver at 60*s.* would be depreciation; and then it appeared, after the noble Lord had moved a Resolution about depreciation, and talked a great deal about it, that the noble Lord did not know what depreciation was. The hon. Member next referred to Mr. Baring's declaration, that he would not object to one-pound notes.

Mr. *Baring* begged to correct the hon. Member. He spoke hypothetically, and said, that if the two other conditions he had mentioned were fulfilled, he should not then object to consider the propriety of issuing one-pound notes.

Mr. *Attwood* continued: The hon. Member had in 1826 spoken in the strongest terms against small notes. In 1830 also, when he (Mr. Attwood) had moved two resolutions, one of which related to the small notes, and the other to the silver standard, the hon. Member had denounced the small notes, and had agreed in the propriety of the silver standard. The hon. Member had then expressly stated, that by adopting silver they would have a better chance of maintaining the standard than by the gold standard only. And was he now to be condemned for recommending that as tending to depreciation, which the hon. Member said would maintain the standard? By supporting his Motion, Members would pledge themselves to no opinion; but by adopting the amendment of the noble Lord, they would pledge themselves to a line of conduct which, if a war were to break out—an event so likely to happen that it was stated as the excuse for keeping up our large military establishments—must be departed from within six months after that event. It said, that supply and demand went on notwithstanding the change in our currency, and then, he would ask, why object to his Motion for inquiry? It was said, that he sought a depreciation in the currency, but he denied the statement; he never had any such intention. For twenty years and upwards the currency of this country had been depreciated; distress followed that change, and it was not asking too much to inquire into the present state of distress. The system he advocated was that which Mr. Pitt had advocated, and, if it were followed up, no doubt it would lead to the most beneficial results. The noble Lord opposite said, he could not take off more taxes; perhaps he could not and why? Because of our debt and taxes, and the strange alteration in our currency. In the present state of our finances we could not enter into war, and the Government knew it well. If there were to-morrow a proclamation of war the Bank would reduce its issues, as theyhad done before, and every man could calculate upon the results. The Bank of England in 1793 had prepared themselves for the approaching crisis; and, indeed, they would have been insane if they had not done so. In 1810 the Bank had found out that they would be driven to cash payments; they restricted their issues; and thence the failure which ensued in 1812, 1813, 1814. But then it was said, by the right hon. Baronet (Sir Robert Peel) look to the issues of the Bank in 1817 and 1818. Well, admit the greater issues, and he would ask what had that to do with this question? The year 1816 was one of great distress to agriculture. He was merely making these observations in answer to observations which had been made against his Motion; and so far he thought he was entitled to give an answer to them. In 1816 it was said that 7,000,000 of sovereigns were issued by the Bank, but that took place in consequence of a reduction by the Bank of their paper issues. On a question of this nature, which was important to the public, he had felt it his duty to make these observations. [*Here an interruption took place, the House having before frequently displayed marks of impatience, and a cry of "Turn him out," followed this interruption.*] After order had been restored the hon. Member continued. The right hon. Vice-President of the Board of Trade had entered into elaborate statements to show that no distress existed, which that right hon. Gentleman had strenuously denied.

Mr. *Poulett Thomson* said, his observations had been mistaken by the hon. Member. He never denied the existence of distress, but he said it was not as great as had been stated by the hon. Member.

Mr. *Attwood*: Well, distress was admitted, and that was all he contended for. The right hon. Gentleman said, "Look at tobacco with all the duty upon it, and then tell the House of public distress." Why, he would tell the House and the country that, notwithstanding the increase of the duty on tobacco, still great distress existed. He thought the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman went rather to show a falling-off than an improvement of the state of the country. The right hon. Gentleman had chosen to draw a comparison between the years 1814 and 1832, and had endeavoured to show that a great rise in the consumption had taken place between those periods. He had said, that in 1814 the consumption of tobacco was 15,273,000lbs.; and in 1832 20,235,000lbs., which showed an increase of thirty-one per cent. on the consumption, while the increase of the population was twenty-four per cent. This, however, arose from the circumstance that tobacco had been entirely excluded from the country during the years 1813-14, on account of the American War; and such was the effect of the exclusion, that the price had risen in 1814, from 1¾*d* (the price in 1812) to 1*s*. 2*d*. Taking, however, the average of the three years previous to that period, which were not affected by any such clause, it would be found, that the consumption for Great Britain and Ireland was 20,691,000lbs.: and while in 1832, it was only 20,235,000lbs., so that there was a falling-off notwithstanding the advance of population. Then with regard to tea. The right hon. Gentleman had stated, that the consumption of tea in 1814 was 19,224,000lbs., and in 1832 31,548,000lbs., being an increase of eighty-three per cent, while the increase of population had been only twenty-four per cent. But he (Mr. Attwood) begged the House to remark that the right hon. Gentleman had taken in 1814 the amount consumed in Great Britain only, while in 1832 he had taken the quantity consumed in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. It was derogatory to the right hon. Gentleman to call upon the House to proceed to deliberate upon the important question before them on such information as that, and he would not take up the time of the House to refute it. He admitted, however, that there was some confusion in the returns, and that it was not easy to separate the proportions used in the two countries. But it would be found from a comparison of the average consumption of tea, during the years 1800, 1801, 1802, and 1803, with the year 1832 that the consumption of Great Britain and Ireland during the former of those years was 24,300,000lbs., while in 1832 it was 31,548,000lbs.; being an increase of less than thirty per cent., although the increase in the population, in the same period, had exceeded fifty per cent. The result, therefore, proved that there was a diminution of comfort among the people, instead of an increase, as the right hon. Gentleman had wished to show. The right hon. Gentleman had also stated, and he had held it up as a matter of gratulation to the country, that the consumption of sugar had advanced eighty-three per cent. since 1814—the quantities being in 1814, 1,997,000lbs., and in 1832, 3,655,000lbs. But the House should bear in mind, that in 1814 the European ports were first opened, after having been closed from the autumn of 1810, which occasioned an unusually large export in 1819, and enhanced the average price to the unprecedented sum of 103*s.* 4¼*d.* per cwt., while in 1832, the average price was only 48*s.*—a reduction which had led to the ruin of the West-India interest. It appeared, however, that on an average of the six years previous to 1832, the increase had only been twenty per cent. while the advance in the population had been twenty-four per cent.—The House at this period showing strong symptoms of impatience, the hon. Member said, that he would only add, that if the House did not agree to his Motion, the people would consider that they were not done justice to, and the result might be a separation between them.

The House divided on the Question that the words proposed by Lord Althorp to be omitted stand part of the question—Ayes 139; Noes 331: Majority 192.

Lord Althorp's Resolution that the words "It is the opinion of this House that any alteration in the monetary system of the country, which would have the effect of lowering the standard of value would be highly inexpedient and dangerous" be there added, was then put, upon which Mr. Attwood moved an amendment to add the words "and that a Select Committee be appointed, which, having regard to this opinion, shall inquire into the general distress existing among the industrious classes of the community, and into the most effectual means of its relief."

Lord *Althorp* said, that, although he might not object to have the Resolution of the hon. Gentleman, for the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the distress of the country generally, agreed to, he could not, at the same time, allow the words proposed to be added to his (Lord Althorp's) Motion to be inserted in it. The question was undoubtedly one of very great importance, and might be brought forward by the hon. Gentleman, or by any other hon. Gentleman, as a separate motion; but he must object to any alteration being made in his Amendment. He felt that it was important his Amendment should stand as it was, a substantive motion, and that the decision of the House upon so important a subject as that of the depreciation of the currency should be recorded, without any qualification or addition, in the Journals of the House. Besides this objection, there was another, which must be fatal to the hon. Gentleman's purpose, and that was, that his motion for a Committee was so generally worded, that it would be impossible to limit its attention to any given subject.

Sir *Francis Burdett* said, that on a subject which involved the consideration of the standard of the currency, and its effects upon the country, it would be most unjust to expect a pledge from any hon. Member as to the line of conduct he would pursue. They had heard a great deal about the distress of the working classes, and the labouring poor, but, from all he could learn from persons competent to form a proper judgment on the subject, he was inclined to hope that the distress alluded to had been greatly alleviated. What he meant was, that they were not actually without food and raiment. The landed proprietors would be affected by any distress that might bear heavily upon the working classes; but in his opinion, even if distress existed, the motion of the hon. Gentleman was not the way to alleviate it. He might be willing to agree to a distinct motion for inquiry into the distress of the country, but he certainly could not consent to questions very different in their nature, being mixed up and brought forward together.

Sir *Robert Peel* thought, that the new proposition of the hon. member for Whitehaven was so important, that it ought to be reserved for a separate and distinct motion, and brought forward at an earlier hour, in order that its discussion might be fully and fairly entered into. He undoubtedly felt unwilling to venture, at that late hour, to state his view of a matter so important, and therefore he hoped that, even should the House be predisposed to agree in the hon. Gentleman's new proposition, they would not, at all events, prejudge the question by a hasty decision; for they should recollect that the functions of the Committee of Inquiry described in the hon. Gentleman's Resolution differed in no one particular from a Committee of the whole House. The subject was in fact an inquiry into the state of the country generally, and that was a matter of such vast importance, that it belonged only to a Committee of the whole House, and could not be delegated to any other or separate body. In common justice, even if they had the power, they ought not to substitute a private Committee for the established course of such inquiries; but, whether they were ready to assent to to or deny the proposition, he hoped they would not act with precipitation.

Mr. *Hume* fully concurred in what had fallen from the right hon. Baronet as to the inexpediency of their proceeding to the appointment of the proposed Committee. The objects which the Committee would have to inquire into should be stated, and some limitation put to the inquiry, before its appointment was agreed to. When such a motion was brought before the House in a distinct form, he should, in all probability, vote for it but at present he must oppose it.

Lord *Stormont* agreed, that a hasty decision would not be desirable, and he begged, therefore, to suggest, that the further debate upon the question should be adjourned. It had been asserted that no distress existed in the country; but, of all men in that House, he was most astonished to hear such a declaration from the lips of the hon. Baronet, the member for Westminster. The noble Lord concluded by moving the adjournment of the debate.

Sir *Francis Burdett* denied that he had represented that distress did not exist in the country; but what he had said was, that from all the information he had received, the working classes were not in distress.

Lord *John Russell* said, that although he concurred with the right hon. Baronet (Sir Robert Peel) that a question so important ought to receive a separate consideration, he yet could not agree to the proposition of adjournment made by the noble Lord. The question, however, was, should any addition be made to the proposition of his noble friend (Lord Althorp), or should the House now appoint a Committee to consider the distresses of the country? It might be fit that the Resolution of the hon. member for Whitehaven should receive a distinct consideration, but certainly it would not become the House to adjourn until they had decided whether they would sanction or resist the attempt that was made to occasion a depreciation of the currency. The hon. Gentleman, too, ought to consider whether his object would not be better answered by bringing the question forward another day, and upon other grounds; for it must be apparent to the hon. Gentleman, as it was to every one else, that his Motion was too general.

Mr. *Matthias Attwood* protested against the noble Lord who had just sat down imputing to him designs other than those which were obvious from the language of his Resolution. He assured them that he felt it his duty to persevere in taking the sense of the House on his proposition, if it were only to put the sincerity of the declaration of hon. Members to the test of proof. If it was intended to grant any inquiry at all into the distress of the country, why object to his motion, because it happened to come in that particular form?

Mr. *Methuen* assured the House, that the statements which they had heard of the non-existence of distress from the hon. Baronet, the member for Westminster, and others, were fabulous. Only last week, he had seen forty able-bodied young men before the Quarter Sessions of Wiltshire, and heard them declare, that they got only half-a-crown a-week from their employers, though they worked twelve hours a-day, and that their subsistence was eked out by parish allowance. Distress existed in the country to a most grievous extent.

Mr. *Robert Palmer* perfectly agreed with the hon. Member who had brought the subject forward, that it would be quite consistent to vote for the appointment of a Committee of Inquiry, without in the least considering the question of the currency on the motion of the noble Lord (Althorp). He should certainly feel proud to vote for the Motion of the noble Lord on this occasion as a substantive motion, but then it was upon the conviction that the noble Lord would not oppose the proposition of the hon. Gentleman, the member for Whitehaven, when it was brought forward as a separate and distinct motion.

Lord *Ebrington* could not avoid saying that he was surprised at hearing the Amendment of the hon. member for Whitehaven, and the more particularly as the hon. Member had, in his speech, stated that in his opinion any inquiry into the distresses of the country, unless coupled with an inquiry into the effects of the monetary system, would be a delusion and a mockery.

Mr. *Matthias Attwood* said, the noble Lord could not possibly have heard his observations, because he always said, that the House had the means of partially relieving distress, even without altering the present standard of value.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, the time was certainly come when an inquiry ought to be instituted into the distresses of the country. Whatever might be said as to the state of England, no doubt could be entertained that distress existed in Ireland. For his own part, he was opposed to an alteration in the system of currency; but, now that the House had in effect decided against such a change, there was, in his opinion, no objection to inquiring into the state of the country.

Mr. *Beaumont* said, the hon. and learned member for Dublin took every opportunity of opposing the Government. For his own part, he must oppose the Motion of the hon. member for Whitehaven.

The Question, that the Debate be adjourned, was negatived without a division.

On the Question, that the Amendment moved by Mr. Attwood be added to Lord Althorp's resolution, the House divided: Ayes 134; Noes 271—Majority 137.

The Question was then put upon Lord Althorp's Resolution: Ayes 304; Noes 49—Majority in favour of the Resolution 255.

List of the Noes *on the Question that the words proposed by Mr. Attwood stand (the first Division.)*

Abercromby, Right Hon. J.
Acheson, Viscount
Adams, E. H.
Althorp, Viscount
Andover, Viscount
Apsley, Lord
Ashley, Lord
Ashley, Hon. H.
Balfour, J.
Bankes, W. J.
Bannerman, A.
Baring, W. B.
Baring, F.
Baring, A.
Baring, F. T.
Barnet, C. J.
Bayntun, S. A.
Beauclerk, Maj. A. W.
Beaumont, T. W.
Belfast, Earl of
Bellew, R. M.
Berkeley, Hon. G. C. F.
Bernal, R.
Bewes, T.
Biddulph, R.
Bish, T.
Bolling, W.
Bowes, J.
Brigstock, W. P.
Briscoe, J. I.
Brougham, W.
Browne, J. D.
Browne, D.
Buckingham, J. S.
Buller, J. W.
Buller, E.
Buller, C.
Bulteel, J. C.
Bulwer, E. L.
Burdett, Sir F.
Buxton, T. F.
Byng, G.
Byng, Sir J.
Calley, T.
Campbell, Sir J.
Carter, J. B.
Cavendish, Hon. C. C.
Cavendish, Lord
Cavendish, Hon. H. F.
Chaplin, Colonel T.
Chaytor, W. R. C.
Chaytor, Sir W.
Chetwynd, Capt. W. F.
Chichester, J. P. B.
Chichester, Lord A.
Child, J. W.
Clay, W.
Clayton, Col. W. R.
Clive, E. B.
Clive, Hon. R. H.
Cockerell, Sir C.
Codrington, Sir E.
Cole, Hon. A.
Collier, J.
Conolly, Col. E. M.
Cookes, T. H.
Coote, Sir C. H.
Crawley, S.
Dalmeny, Lord

Dalrymple, Sir J. H.
Dashwood, G. H.
Davenport, J.
Dawson, E.
Denison, J. E.
Denison, W. J.
Divett, E.
Donkin, Sir R. S.
Dundas, Capt. J. W.
Dundas, Hon. Sir R. L.
Dundas, Hon. J. C.
Dykes, F. L.
Ebrington, Viscount
Egerton, W. T.
Ellice, E.
Ellis, W.
Elliott, Hon. Capt. G.
Evans, G.
Evans, W.
Ewart, W.
Ewing, J.
Fenton, J.
Fenton, Captain L.
Ferguson, R.
Ferguson, Sir R. A.
Ferguson, Sir R. C.
Fergusson, R. C.
Fielden, W.
Fitzgibbon, R.
Fitzroy, Lord J.
Folkes, Sir W.
Fordwich, Viscount
Forster, C. S.
Fort, J.
Fox, S. L.
Fox, Lt.-Col. C. R.
French, F.
Gaskell, D.
Gaskell, J. M.
Gladstone, W. E.
Gordon, R.
Gore, M.
Graham, Rt. Hon. Sir J.
Grant, Rt. Hon. C.
Grant, Rt. Hon. R.
Grattan, J.
Greene, T. G.
Grey, Hon. Colonel
Grey, Sir G.
Gronow, Capt. R. H.
Grosvenor, Rt. Hon. Lord R.
Grote, G.
Hall, B.
Handley, W. F.
Handley, B.
Harcourt, G. V.
Hawes, B.
Hawkins, J. H.
Heathcote, J.
Hill, Lord M.
Hill, M. D.
Hobhouse, Rt. Hon. Sir J. C.
Hope, Hon. Sir A.
Hope, H. T.
Hornby, E. G.
Horne, Sir W.
Howard, Hon. F. G.
Howard, P. H.
Howard, R.
Howick, Viscount
Hudson, T.
Hughes, W. H.
Hume, J.
Humphery, J.
Hurst, R. H.
Hutt, W.
Hyett, W. H.
Ingham, R.
Inglis, Sir R. H.
Jeffrey, Rt. Hon. F.
Jermyn, Earl
Jerningham, Hon. H.
Jervis, J.
Johnston, A.
Johnstone, Sir J. V. B.
Johnstone, Sir F.
Jolliffe, Colonel
Jones, Captain T.
Kennedy, T. F.
Kerry, Earl of
Key, Sir J.
King, E. B.
Labouchere, H.
Lamb, Hon. G.
Lambton, H.
Lamont, Captain N.
Langston, J. H.
Leech, J.
Lefevre, C. S.
Lemon, Sir C.
Lennard, T. B.
Lennard, Sir T. B.
Lennox, Lord J. G.
Lennox, Lord A.
Lester, B. L.
Lloyd, J. H.
Loch, J.
Locke, W.
Lopes, Sir R.
Lumley, Viscount
Lushington, Dr. S.
Lyall, G.
Lygon, Hon. H. B.
Lynch, A. H.
Maberly, Col. W. L.
Macaulay, T. B.
Mackenzie, J. A. S.
Macleod, R.
Macnamara, Maj. W.
Macnamara, F.
Madocks, J.
Mangles, J.
Marjoribanks, S.
Marryat, J.
Marshall, J.
Martin, J.
Martin, J.
Maxfield, W.
Mildmay, P. St. J.
Milton, Viscount
Molesworth, Sir W.
Molyneux, Lord
Moreton, Hon. A. H.
Moreton, Hon. H. G. F.
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrison, J.
Murray, J. A.
Neeld, J.
Newark, Viscount
Nicholl, J.
Noel, Sir G.
North, F.
O'Callaghan, Hon. C.
O'Dwyer, A. C.
Oliphant, L.
Ormelie, Earl of
Oswald, J.
Owen, Sir J.
Parnell, Sir H.
Paget, F.
Palmer, General C.
Patten, J. W.
Pechell, Sir S. J. B.
Peel, Rt. Hon. Sir R.
Pelham, Hon. C. A.
Pendarves, E. W.
Penleaze, J. S.
Pepys, C. C.
Peter, W.
Petre, Hon. E.
Philips, M.
Phillpotts, J.
Pinney, W.
Plumptre, J. P.
Ponsonby, Hn. W. F. S.
Potter, R.
Poulter, J.
Price, R.
Price, Sir R.
Pryme, G.
Ramsbottom, J.
Ramsden, J. C.
Reid, Sir J. R.
Ricardo, D.
Rice, Hon. T. S.
Rider, T.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Robarts, A. W.
Robinson, G. R.
Roebuck, J. A.
Rolfe, R. M.
Romilly, J.
Romilly, E.
Rooper, J. B.
Ross, C.
Rotch, B.
Rumbold, C. E.
Russell, Rt. Hon. Ld. J.
Russell, Lord
Russell, Lord C. J. F.
Russell, W. C.
Russell, C.
Ruthven, E. S.
Ryle, J.
Sanderson, R.
Sandon, Viscount
Scarlett, Sir J.
Seale, Colonel
Sebright, Sir J.
Sharpe, General M.
Sheppard, T.
Simeon, Sir R.
Skipwith, Sir G.
Slaney, R. A.
Smith, J. A.
Smith, J.
Smith, R. V.
Somerset, Lord G.
Spankie, Mr. Serjeant
Stanley, Hon. H. T.
Staunton, Sir G. T.
Staveley, J. K.
Stawell, Colonel
Steuart, R.
Stewart, Sir M. S.
Stewart, E.
Strickland, G.
Strutt, E.
Stuart, Lord D. C.
Stuart, Captain
Surrey, Earl of
Talbot, J.
Tancred, H. W.
Tayleur, W.
Tennant, J. E.
Thicknesse, R.
Thomson, Right Hon. C. P.
Throckmorton, R. G.
Todd, J. R.
Tooke, W.
Tower, C. T.
Townley, R. G.
Tracy, C. A.
Traill, G.
Trelawney, W. L. S.
Trevor, Hon. G. R.
Troubridge, Sir E. T.
Tyrell, Sir J. T.
Verney, Sir H.
Vernon, Hon. G. J.
Villiers, Viscount
Vivian, J. H.
Walker, R.
Walsh, Sir J. B.
Walter, J.
Warburton, H.
Warre, J. A.
Wason, R.
Waterpark, Lord
Watson, Hon. R.
Wemyss, Captain J.
Weyland, Major R.
Whalley, Sir S.
Whitbread, W. H.
Whitmore, W. W.
Wigney, I. N.
Wilbraham, G.
Williams, W. A.
Williams, R.
Williams, T. P.
Williamson, Sir H.
Wilmot, Sir J. E.
Windham, W. H.
Wood, M.
Wynn, Sir W. W.

Wynn, Rt. Hon. C. W.
Yorke, Capt. C. P.

TELLERS.
Duncannon, Viscount
Wood, C.

List of the AYES *on the same Question.*

Aglionby, H. A.
Agnew, Sir A.
Arbuthnot, Hon. H.
Astley, Sir John
Attwood, T.
Bainbridge, E. T.
Barnard, E. G.
Barron, W.
Bell, M.
Benett, J.
Bentinck, Lord G.
Berkeley, Hon. C. F.
Bethell, R.
Blackstone, W. S.
Blake, Sir F.
Blandford, Marq. of
Brocklehurst, J.
Brodie, W. B.
Bruce, Lord E.
Bulkeley, Sir R. W.
Burrell, Sir C.
Callender, J. H.
Calvert, N.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cayley, Sir G.
Cayley, E. S.
Chandos, Marquess of
Chapman, A.
Chapman, M. L.
Christmas, W.
Curteis, H. B.
Curteis, Capt. E. B.
Dare, R. W. H.
Darlington, Earl of
Davies, Colonel T.
Dick, Q.
Dilwyn, L. W.
Dugdale, W. S.
Duncombe, Hon. W.
Dunlop, Captain J.
Eastnor, Viscount
Etwall, R.
Fancourt, Major
Fellowes, H. A. W.
Fellowes, Hon. N.
Ferguson, Captain G.
Fielden, J.
Finch, G.
Finn, W. F.
Fitzgerald, T.
Fitzroy, Lord C.
Fitzsimon, C.
Fitzsimon, N.
Fremantle, Sir T.
Gillon, W. D.
Godson, R.
Gordon, Hon. Capt. W.
Goring, H. D.
Greville, Hon. Sir C.
Grimston, Viscount
Guest, J. J.
Guise, Sir B. W.

Halcomb, J.
Halford, H.
Handley, H.
Hanmer, Sir J.
Hanmer, Colonel H.
Hardy, J.
Harland, W. C.
Hay, Colonel A. L.
Hayes, Sir E.
Henniker, Lord
Hodges, T. L.
Hoskins, K.
Hotham, Lord
Houldsworth, T.
Ingilby, Sir W. A.
Irton, S.
Kemp, T. R.
Kerrison, Sir E.
Knatchbull, Sir E.
Lalor, P.
Lambert, H.
Langdale, Hon. C.
Langton, Colonel G.
Lee, J. L. H.
Lennox, Lord W.
Lincoln, Earl of
Lister, E. C.
Lowther, Viscount
Lowther, Hon. H. C.
Mandeville, Viscount
Martin, T. B.
Maxwell, Sir J.
Maxwell, J.
Methuen, P.
Miller, W. H.
Mosley, Sir O.
Norreys, Lord
O'Connell, D.
O'Connell, C.
O'Connell, Morgan
O'Connell, J.
Ossulston, Lord
Palmer, C. F.
Palmer, R.
Parker, J.
Parker, Sir H.
Parrott, J.
Pease, J.
Perceval, Colonel
Richards, J.
Rickford, W.
Roe, J.
Ruthven, E.
Sanford, E. A.
Scholefield, J.
Shawe, R. N.
Sinclair, G.
Stanley, E.
Stewart, J.
Stormont, Viscount
Talbot, C. R. M.
Talbot, J. H.

Tennyson, Rt. Hon. C.
Townshend, Lord C.
Tullamore, Lord
Turner, W.
Tynte, C. J. Kemyss
Tyrell, C.
Vigors, N. A.
Vincent, Sir F.
Vyvyan, Sir R. R.
Walker, C. A.

Watkins, J. L.
Williams, Colonel G.
Willoughby, Sir H.
Wrottesley, Sir J.
Young, J.
Young, G. F.

TELLERS.
Attwood, M.
Ross, Captain H.

Paired off.

Cole, Lord	Keppel, Hon. G.
Cooper, E. J.	Maxwell, H.
Grant, Hon. Colonel	Torrens, Colonel R.
Hardinge, Hon. Sir H.	Tynte, C. K. K.
Heneage, G. F.	Welby, G. E.

The following Members, who voted with the Ministry on the first division, voted in the Minority of 154, to add to Lord Althorp's Resolution "that it is inexpedient to lower the standard of value," these words:—"That a Select Committee be appointed, which, having regard to this opinion, shall inquire into the general distress existing among the industrious classes of the community, and into the most effectual means for its relief."

(The Second Division.)

Adams, E. H.
Beauclerk, Major
Brigstock, W. B.
Briggs, R.
Briscoe, J. I.
Bulwer, H. L.
Ewing, J.
Fenton, J.
Fielden, W.
Fort, J.
Gaskell, D.
Hall, B.
Handley, Major
Humphery, J.
Hyett, W. H.
Ingham, R.
Jervis, J.
Jones, T.

Lennox, Lord A.
Lennox, Lord G.
Macnamara, Major
Macnamara, F.
O'Connell, M.
O'Dwyer, A. C.
Petre, Hon. E.
Rider, T.
Ross, H.
Ruthven, E.
Stanley, E.
Stanley, T. B.
Tayleur, W.
Thompson, W.
Trevor, Hon. G. R.
Wason, W.
Yelverton, Hon. W. H.

The NOES *on the Third or Last Division.*

Attwood, T.
Barnard, E.
Bell, M.
Benett, J.
Bentinck, Lord G.
Blake, Sir F.
Blandford, Marq. of
Brodie, W. B.
Burdett, Sir F.
Cayley, E.
Chapman, M. L.
Curteis, H.
Dare, H.

Dillwyn, L.
Etwall, R.
Fitzgerald, T.
Fitzsimon, C.
Gillon, W.
Godson, R.
Goring, H. D.
Irton, S.
Kerrison, Sir E.
Lalor, P.
Lambert, H.
Langdale, Hon. C.
Lennox, Lord W.

Maxwell, J.
Methuen, P.
O'Connell, D.
O'Connell, Maurice
O'Connell, Morgan
O'Connell, J.
O'Connell, C.
Perceval, Colonel
Richards, J.
Roe, J.
Ross, H.
Ruthven, E.
Scholefield, J.
Stanley, E.
Stanley, E. J.
Stewart, J.
Talbot, J. H.
Tennyson, C.
Tynte, C.
Vigors, N.
Walker, C. A.

TELLERS.

Attwood, M.
Sinclair, G.

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HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, April 25, 1833.

MINUTES.] Bill. Read a second time:—Public Revenue (Scotland).

Petitions presented. By Lord SUFFIELD, the Dukes of RICHMOND, NORFOLK, and CLEVELAND, by the Earls of DURHAM, SEFTON, GREY, and MORLEY, and by Lords DUNDAS and BARHAM, from a very great Number of Places,—against Slavery.—By the Duke of NORFOLK, from the Cutlers of Sheffield; and by Earl GREY, from Kingsbridge and Dodbrooke, for Limiting the Hours for Employing Children in Mills and Factories.—By the Earl of ROSEBERY, from the Medical Practitioners of Manchester, against the Apothecaries Act; and from Paisley, against the Existing System of Church Patronage in Scotland.—By Earl GREY, from the Landholders of the Barony of Castlereagh, for amending the Grand Jury Laws (Ireland).—By the Earl of RODEN, from the Synod of Perth and Stirling, for securing to the Irish the Performance of Church Service in their own language; and from an Orange Lodge, Birmingham, against the Irish Church Bill.

LOCAL JUDICATURES.] Lord *Lyndhurst* presented two Petitions from the Commissioners of the Court of Requests of Kingston-upon-Hull, and from the Inhabitants generally of that place, against the 19th Clause of the Local Judicature Bill, which takes away the jurisdiction of the Courts of Requests. The petitioners complained, that the machinery of the new Act was not well adapted to the habits and circumstances of the country, and they prayed to be heard against that particular clause of it by Counsel at the Bar of the House.

The *Lord Chancellor* said, that the petitions presented by the noble Lord were well worthy the attention of their Lordships. He was aware that these were not the only petitions which would be presented against the 19th clause of the Local Bill, and he did not hesitate to declare that some enactment, different from an immediate repeal of the jurisdiction of those Courts would be necessary. It was absolutely necessary, however, that something should be done to put them on a better footing. There were upwards of 280 such Courts in different parts of the country, some of which had little or no jurisdiction, and many others of which were full of abuses. There were exceptions, however, in which a great deal of business was done, to the satisfaction of those concerned. These, he thought, might be saved at least for the present. But he thought that it would be more convenient, if, instead of their jurisdiction being only optional on the part of litigants (as prayed for by the petitioners), which would leave them Courts only in name (for he had no doubt, if they had only a common jurisdiction with the Courts he proposed to establish, that they would be forsaken)—he thought he said, it would be proper to give them exclusive jurisdiction over the class of causes of which they now took cognizance. He should therefore think it his duty, on the introduction of the Local Jurisdiction Bill, to move some modification of the 19th clause.

Petitions laid on the Table.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, April 25, 1833.

MINUTES.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of Sir HENRY VERNEY, various Returns relative to the Management of all the Gaols in England and Wales.—On the Motion of Mr. GROTE, an Account of the Local Duties paid on Coals in the City of London.—On the Motion of Mr. HUME, an Account of all the Sums paid as Compensation for the Loss of Sinecures in the United Kingdom.—On the Motion of Sir JOHN HOBHOUSE, an Account of the Sums paid to each Newspaper in Ireland for inserting Government Proclamations.—On the Motion of Mr. Alderman THOMPSON, an Account of the Surcharges made in the last year for the House-tax in the Borough of Sunderland.—On the Motion of Mr. BAINBRIDGE, an Account of the Number of Gallons of Proof Spirits permitted out from the Distillers' Stocks in England in the years 1832, and 1833.

Petitions presented. By Messrs. ADAMS, LENNARD, and CHRISTMAS, from a Number of Places,—against Slavery.—By Mr. GORING, from Yapton, for a Repeal of the Duties on One-Horse Carts, Soap, and Malt and Hops.—By Mr. CHRISTMAS, from several Bodies of Clergymen in Ireland, for Alterations in the Irish Church Reform Bill.—By Mr. HALL DARE, from the Resident Clergy of the County of Essex, in favour of the Lord's Day Observance Bill; and from Barking, against the Sale of Beer Act.—By Colonel DAVIES, from Worcester, for a Repeal of the Assessed Taxes.—By Mr. S. A. BAYNTUN, from several Dissenting Congregations, for Exempting Protestant Dissenting Chapels from the payment of Parochial Rates.

EDUCATION—CRIMINAL RETURNS.] Mr. *Lennard* presented a Petition from the towns of Epping and Harlow, calling on the House to devise some plan by which the children of the poorer classes may be provided with education suited to their situation in society, and which might not interfere with their religious feelings and opinions. The petitioners intreated those who differed from them as to the importance of education, to examine the gaols and houses of correction, penitentiaries, and even workhouses of the country, and to compare the extent of education among the inmates with the diffusion of knowledge throughout the country at large, when it would be found that crime prevailed the most among the least-instructed. He entirely agreed with the petitioners, who stated, that although the increase of crime in this country was not to be attributed to ignorance alone, yet that, without education, the mass of society could not be preserved from corruption, and an increase of crime. He would take that opportunity of expressing his regret at the imperfect manner in which the criminal returns of this country were made; and which showed only the number of committals, convictions, and executions. But in France the returns were much more in detail, and in them the persons who were convicted, were classified according to age, sex, and other circumstances. The result of the French returns was curious, and tended strongly to illustrate and support the view of the petitioners. In one year—namely, the year 1830—out of 1,790 persons committed to prison in France, 1,063 persons could neither read nor write; 496 could read and write imperfectly; 107 could read and write well; and forty-six had received a good education. The following year, 1831, produced similar results, showing, in the language of the petitioners, that crime prevailed the most amongst the least instructed. He had no doubt that similar results would be established in this country, had we the same means of information; but unfortunately our returns were not drawn up in the same manner they were in France. But it was made clear by the Committee on secondary punishments, which sat some years ago, that atrocious crimes, viz.—offences against the person—are diminished precisely in the proportion that the means of education are enlarged. The result was the same in all countries. He would not, on the presentation of a petition, trouble the House with any more facts, but he trusted the Government would take the prayer of the petitioners into their serious consideration.

Mr. *Hume* considered the prayer of the petition to be one highly deserving the attention of the House, as the subject was of the highest possible importance. The Report on the Poor-laws presented a state of ignorance and crime in the country which ought to be appalling to every person—in short, it amounted to this:—That if some speedy and effectual check were not put to the dreadful march of demoralization, no property would be safe. Instead of the miserable trifling of which the House daily made a display, they ought to set arduously to work in producing effectual reform, and education was one of the particular subjects on which it was most required. Experience taught, that crime was the inevitable concomitant of ignorance. He, in common with the whole country, felt deeply grieved that his Majesty's Ministers had not brought before the House, as leading questions, the subjects of education and the Poor-laws. He was very sorry that the Lord Chancellor—all powerful as he was in the Cabinet—had so grievously disappointed the ardent expectations of the whole nation on this most important subject. It must, however, inevitably be brought under consideration sooner or later, whether the present Ministers liked it or not. What had the people been led to expect from the Reform Bill? A large reduction of taxation, to be relieved from the dreadful pressure of their burthens; and surely this was but a reasonable desire in a nation oppressed with the charge of twenty-eight millions every year for their debt, and with twenty-two millions every year for the charges of their most overwhelmingly expensive Government. But what had the people as yet got by the Reform Bill? Nothing, or worse than nothing. In the instance of the Church, had there been anything like proper or effectual reform? In this, as in everything else for the benefit of the people, the Government had gone on the principle of doing things by halves; but if they expected that the nation would long suffer these insults, they would find themselves excessively mistaken. If this system were persevered in, the people would inevitably look elsewhere for better stewards, and he (Mr. Hume) most certainly should expect, in the course of a few months, to see the Right hon. member for Tamworth borne into the House in that capacity on the shoulders of the people. He did not see any of the Ministers in the House to tell them so; but he wished they had been where he had been that day, at a Meeting on the subject of the House and Window Taxes, where 4,000 or 5,000 persons, not "the rabble," but respectable and orderly shopkeepers and tradesmen—he wished some Members of the Cabinet had been there and seen the manner in which the mention of his Majesty's Ministers had been received. It would have been a lesson for them which they could not forget. They would see, that the system they had pursued was hateful to the people; and they would learn, besides, that the already highly-indignant people were determined not to allow the continuance of such a system much longer. Government must shake off the trifling and lethargy which had hitherto so disgusted the people, and must bring forward measures suited to the necessities of the country. This was the only way in which Lord Althorp— [*order, order*!] well, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Lord Grey—he supposed he was not out of order in mentioning that name—could redeem their characters with the English nation, of every grade of society.

Mr. *Hall Dare* concurred in the prayer of the Petition, believing that the most signal moral advantages would result to the people from their better education; and he therefore hoped that at no distant period his Majesty's Ministers would bring forward measures to effect this object. He also trusted that the House would on that occasion call to mind that no measure or system could be efficient for such purposes, which was not calculated to infuse religious principles into the minds of the people. Without the inculcation of religious principles, any system would be faulty.

Mr. *Benett* deprecated the attack made on Ministers by the hon. member for Middlesex. As to what he had said about their trifling with the business of the country, he must observe, that altogether no man had caused more interruption in the way of transacting public business, by irrelevant discussions, than the hon. Member himself.

Mr. *O'Connell* defended the hon. Member for Middlesex, than whom no Member more expedited real public business. Referring to the meeting held that day at the Crown and Anchor, he must say, that he had also been there, and wished the Ministers also had been present. As they were not, it was well that they should be made acquainted with the sentiments expressed there; and certainly no Ministry had ever been more execrated at any meeting than the present Government were on this occasion, for having so dreadfully deceived the people in putting forward so miserable, so paltry, and so contemptible a pretence of reduction as they had done.

Sir *Matthew White Ridley* deprecated such attacks on Ministers; their character would be best appreciated by their acts; and in considering these, it behoved the people to make allowances for the difficulties of the position in which Ministers had been placed since taking office. He must, however, protest against the doctrines of the hon. members for Middlesex and Dublin, which were calculated to overturn the Constitution, and would be a curse to the country.

PROVISION AGAINST WANT OF EMPLOYMENT.] Mr. *Slaney* moved for leave to bring in a Bill to enable manufacturers and mechanics to ensure themselves against temporary want of employment, by giving them facilities for creating a safe joint fund, vested in the public funds, or other approved and available security. He was well aware, that this was a sort of subject which did not interest any political or party feelings in its favour; but no matter which referred to so important a part of our population ought, in his opinion, to be without interest to the House. In order to show the importance of the subject he would briefly call the attention of the House to the increase in the manufacturing population. During the present century, or at least within the last fifty years, the whole population of England had increased at the rate of twenty-five per cent, but the manufacturing population had increased at the rate of fifty per cent. At the commencement of that period, the proportion they bore to the agricultural population was one-half—now they were as two to one. In the same period, they had made a corresponding advance in intelligence; and though they had made, in some cases, provision for themselves, they were still exposed to the evils of being occasionally thrown out of employment. They were exposed to all the evils of a fluctuating demand for their labour. At one period they were excessively well off—at another they were plunged into the deepest distress. He would call the attention of the House to the causes of these fluctuations—to their effects—and to the means of remedying them. The causes of the alterations in the demand for labour were either foreign or domestic. Of the former, he might mention changes in the commercial laws of other countries. Thus the alteration in the American Tariff had an immediate effect on our iron trade. At Wolverhampton the demand for its manufactures was much lessened, and the demand for the labour of the people much diminished. In the same town, during the war, the demand for locks, hinges, and other coarse iron manufactures for exportation, was considerable; but since the peace, when our neighbours had become our rivals, the demand for these articles had diminished one-sixth, and the great body of the people had been thrown into a situation of want and distress. Political alterations had the same effect as alterations in the commercial laws. For example, the war between Holland and Belgium had thrown our Flemish rivals out of the market of Holland, and, for a season, had ensured us a monopoly of that market. For a considerable period we had the monopoly of the markets of the Continent, but at present the Flemings and the Germans were our rivals in every place; which had a considerable effect in reducing the demand for employment in our country. There also was a change in the demand for labour, arising from a change in habits and fashions, which sometimes threw hundreds and thousands of persons out of employment. For example:—a change had taken place from wearing linen to wearing woollen, and then came the use of cotton, which had in part since given place to silk, and each of these changes made a change in the demand for labour. During the transition from one employment to another, and until the workmen were taken up by the new manufacture, they suffered most severely. Surely it was not unworthy of the House to endeavour to remedy that. There was also a change from local cause. Manufacturers migrated from one place to another, which caused a continued fluctuation of demand for labour in different districts, and exposed masses of men to great distress. For example, the discovery of the steam-engine, and its application to a great variety of purposes, had caused the migration of almost all our considerable manufactures to those districts in which were deposited the great beds of coal. He had said enough to make it apparent to the House that the labouring manufacturers were exposed to great fluctuations, and he wished to enable them to provide against the evils of such fluctuations by their own prudence. The discoveries in art also produced changes in the condition of the people. Thus, the invention of the power-loom, by introducing a cheaper mode of weaving, had deprived the hand-loom weaver of employment. In 1820 there were 14,000 power-looms; in 1828 the number was 55,000; and, he might venture to say, that it was now nearly doubled. Each of them did the work of several weavers, and the employment of them had reduced the hand-loom weavers to a most wretched condition. Changes were also brought about by the violence of the workmen themselves. Thus, the conduct of the carpet-weavers had driven much of that manufacture to Scotland. The use of canals and rail-roads might have a similar effect. A deficient harvest or any insecurity of property might also lead to similar results. The consequence of all these circumstances was, that there was never a time when a great number of people might not be found in distress and out of employment in some parts of the country. The remedy which he meant to propose was no wonder-working plan—was no forced Legislative Enactment—it was nothing compulsory; it was simply permissive, and would facilitate and allow the workmen to put their funds in a safe place, to ensure themselves against the evils he had mentioned. He believed that the average wages of the manufacturers, though not great, were sufficient, if equally distributed, to provide for the comfort, satisfaction, and contentment of those in humble occupation. Something, however, was wanted when wages were high, to encourage and enable the people to lay by part of those wages for a season when wages might be low. The manufacturers were themselves eager to do this, and they wanted nothing but facilities to do it to a greater extent than at present. They only asked permission to do that which would benefit themselves and be of great public service. It was already done imperfectly in several trades, but done to an extent sufficient to show that the persons engaged in manufactures were aware of the evils hanging over them, and eager to provide against such contingencies. There was one trade in which a system was established that a person out of work should travel about the country—it was called the tramp system—and when they came to a town where there were any persons of their trade, they had a right to receive a penny from every workman, with a lodging and supper for two or three days, till it was seen whether they could be taken up by the demand for labour. That was a provision against a defective demand for labour, though it was imperfect. Another plan had been followed by the carpet weavers of Kidderminster. When men were out of work, they had a right to receive a certain contribution from each man in work till they got work again. This plan, too, was defective, but it enabled the men, when thrown out of work, to bear it till they again got employment. Another, and the most complete plan was adopted by a large class of workmen of the great City of London—he alluded to the tailors — who were divided into three classes—first workmen, second workmen, and third workmen. When any of these were thrown out of employment, they went to their respective houses of call, and there received an allowance per day in proportion to their skill. So well was their scheme organized, that it never was known that any person of this society applied for parochial relief. Other trades had similar societies, but they suffered from not having a sufficient control over their own funds, and from not having an easy and secure mode of investing their money. There was a difficulty of large bodies acting together, and apportioning their labour to the demand for it; which, having a fund of this kind, might lessen. If they had a fund of this kind, when work was slack, they might work for only two or three days in the week, and thus allow the goods in the market to be gradually absorbed till the demand for their labour was revived. In the case of having no funds, the men, as happened at Wolverhampton, were apt, instead of diminishing their labour, as the demand slackened, to increase it by redoubled exertions. In that place, when a season of distress had arisen, they had actually worked sixteen hours a day, and had accumulated a great stock of commodities in the hands of the masters. Of course he could not blame the masters for that, but that stock was actually made out of the blood and marrow of the workmen. When the demand revived, the stock was so great, that it took a long period before the wages returned to their proper level. Now that would not have happened if these people had had a little fund which would have enabled them to stop working two days in the week. Many masters would, he believed, be happy to make an arrangement with their workmen under such circumstances, for working less, so that the supply might be more speedily brought to a level with the demand, but from want of funds of this kind, the workmen were unable to act upon that principle. What he meant to propose was, that these people should have the power of forming a fund for this purpose, and should have it entirely under their own control. He would extend the principles of the Friendly Societies' Act. The House was probably aware, that by the 10th George 4th, cap. 56, such societies were allowed to provide against infancy, old age, sickness, or other natural states or contingencies which would be made a matter of calculation, and be reduced to an average. That part of the Act completely excluded the workmen from taking advantage of it, to provide a fund against want of employment. That the people would be willing to provide against such a contingency, was, he thought, proved by the number of them who subscribed to Friendly Societies. According to the last Returns, these Societies numbered 1,000,000 subscribers, embracing at least, with their families, 4,000,000 of persons. He proposed to enable the manufacturers to form, by their own means, a joint fund, which they might deposit in places of security, such as the Savings' Banks or the Public Funds, so as always to have a provision against a want of employment. He wished also to fence that fund round with measures of legal safety similar to those which were applied to the funds of Friendly Societies. He would suggest that the manufacturers who chose to form such a fund, should be allowed to draw up their own rules, with no other restriction than that those rules should be legal. The workmen were intelligent, but they were also suspicious, and they did not like to be interfered with. They might, certainly, commit mistakes, but that was their look-out, and, he believed, that they were much less liable to commit mistakes than Members of Parliament who should undertake to prescribe rules for them. He would give them the same facilities to enforce these rules, as were now possessed by Friendly Societies. He would apply all the rules of such societies to these funds — such as making the executors of any officer of the society pay the society before he paid any other person. Further, he would give the same summary mode of recovery as was granted by the Friendly Societies Act. He would then say a few words as to the objections which might be raised to his proposition. It might be said, that while the object of establishing such funds might be, in many instances, highly beneficial, it would be still possible that they might be turned to illegal and improper purposes —that the men would combine to keep up the price of wages—that they would exercise an arbitrary control over the masters, and that the most mischievous consequences would result. A few years ago every man was frightened at the word "combination," and so strongly did the prejudice exist, that, for a very long period, the most odious and disgraceful laws in reference to combination were allowed to remain upon our Statute-book. By the 5th Geo. 4th, however, no less than thirty-eight of those laws were repealed, and less arbitrary, though equally efficacious provisions were made against violence to persons or property. The effect of this Act was in the first instance to excite a very considerable degree of alarm, and in the subsequent year a Committee was appointed to take the whole subject into consideration. The Report of that Committee stated, that although there certainly existed some combinations for mischievous purposes in different parts of the kingdom, the only alterations in the law which the Committee recommended, were the lengthening the period of imprisonment, and the empowering one Magistrate, in some instances, to commit, instead of two. That took place in 1825, the year in which the nation was mad—when bubbles were daily and hourly created—when prices were enormously raised, and when every class of persons was led away by the prospect of great and prodigious wealth. What wonder, then, that at such a period the labouring and manufacturing classes should also be led into the indulgence of false and flattering hopes. But since the year 1825, although some exaggerated complaints had been made from particular districts, very few combinations had taken place. What was meant by combination? The present law said this, "If you combine to intimidate or threaten, or in any way to overawe others, your fellow-workmen, you shall be punished." But were these to prevent men from forming themselves into societies to constitute a fund to be composed of small deposits from their earnings, for the purpose of providing against the vicissitudes which were continually occurring? Were they to prevent the men from doing that, because they were apprehensive that a fund so raised might be applied to improper purposes? Let the House strike the balance between the evils of combination and want of employment; it would find that the latter produced misery and disorder in a degree equal to, if not greater, than the former. If the labouring manufacturers were to apply the fund improperly, the prudence which had led them to accumulate it would soon point out the evil of continuing to do so, and they would learn better. The creation of such funds would not foster a spirit of violent and intimidating combination amongst the workmen; on the contrary, it would have a different effect. The laws against combination had produced the evil; they had excited a feeling of suspicion between the master and the men, and had arrayed the one against the other. This evil had become manifest, if not to both, at least to one of the parties; and he felt assured that the fear and objection which the master manufacturers formerly had to the formation of such funds had greatly diminished, if it were not entirely removed. He was not desirous to do any thing hostile to the masters, or to pass any measure that would take any party by surprise; but when they saw a great practical evil, and when a remedy (which would cost nothing) was suggested, the subject might be deemed well worthy the consideration of any Parliament which had a desire to alleviate the distress of their fellow-men. What produced violent outbreaks of combination, attended by destruction of property, and, in some cases, of life, in manufacturing districts? — Want! — want of employment, followed by want of bread—the people having no reserved fund to fall back on for support. The possession of such a fund would give time and opportunity for reason and truth to work their way, and patience would not be at once abandoned through necessity. In case of disputes between masters and men, the latter having a fund to fall back on, the subject at issue would be argued, not by a resort to violence, but by an appeal to reason, truth, and justice. The existence of the fund would also be beneficial to masters, by removing the temptation to go on producing goods at a time when there was no demand, for the purpose of keeping their workmen from starving. Gluts would be avoided, and the labour-market would not continue loaded so long as at present. He considered that the plan which he proposed to adopt, even should it be found to be partially wrong, could not produce any permanent evil, while the suppression of all combinations would only have the effect of compressing those discontents which were not allowed any legal vent, till they gathered all the force of condensation, and burst forth in acts of violence. It was quite clear that no system of combination could alter the real demand for labour; and if the true state of the case were understood, it would be found that the course which he proposed was the best for avoiding the evils of combination, and, at the same time, for affording relief to the labouring population.

Mr. *Cobbett* said, he had heard hon. Members talk a great deal about the labouring classes putting their money in the funds, and such like securities; but suppose there should be a run upon the Bank, in the way that was explained by Mr. Paine—a thing which was very likely, for it was actually the case in 1827, what would then become of the poor men's securities? It would then come to a scramble, and the word would be "the devil take the hindmost." They were going quite the wrong way to work, and the better way by far would be to take off the burthens of the people, to let them live well, and have nothing to do with the funds.

Mr. *Hardy* said, he should be in favour of any measure which could lead to an improvement in the condition of the labouring and operative classes of the country; yet, at the same time, he feared that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Slaney) was not sufficiently acquainted with the measures which had been pursued for some years past, in order to enable those meritorious classes to make some provision for old age. It could not be doubted that combinations were rife in this country to promote an increase of wages, and that, not for one class of journeymen to which their fellow-journeymen subscribed, but also for other trades, whether tailors, carpenters, plasterers, or others. Now, this he took to be a grievance as well as an act of injustice. He had known instances in the west riding of Yorkshire, when men earning 14*s*. or 15*s*. a-week had been called upon to pay 5*s*. a-week, not to the support of persons in their own trade who were out of employment, but to support persons of other trades who would not work under a certain rate of wages. But, while he said this, he rejoiced that the various trades had been permitted to unite for the purpose, ay, and for the legal purpose too, of not permitting the masters to pay them and work them as they might think proper. The Statute of George 4th referring to combination did not prevent large meetings or unions of working men to regulate their wages; it only went to inflict penalties on such persons as intimidated others from not working at such prices as they might think proper. He should be glad if any plan could be devised to secure a safe support for the labouring classes in their old age, and so far the proposed Bill of the hon. Member (Mr. Slaney), should have his support.

Mr. *Hume* observed, that the hon. Member who had spoken last, said a great deal about the combinations of workmen to raise wages, but forgot that the masters were also in the habit of combining to keep down wages; but these were not denominated combinations, although they existed so generally. It was improper, in his opinion, that any legislative enactment should apply to journeymen, which did not also apply to masters; and it was upon that principle that he had brought forward his measure in 1825. Nothing was said about masters; but a great deal about workmen, their wages, their hours of labour, and their combinations, as by an error of his (Mr. Hume's) he had denominated the meeting and consulting together of workmen. He objected, however, to the interference of the Legislature with the funds of any description of persons. It was true that combinations, after the passing of the Bill which he had proposed in 1825, had been carried to an illegal extent, insomuch that a Committee of the House of Commons, of which he (Mr. Hume) was a Member, had been compelled to examine parties belonging to Liverpool and Newcastle, without publishing their names; but since the removal of the grounds of complaint which had given rise to these unions, they had assumed a much more pacific character, and were now confined to their legitimate objects. It had been argued against the measure, that it might be made an instrument and an engine for producing very great mischief, in consequence of the hands in whose management the funds would be left; but he had too high an opinion of the good sense of the labouring classes of the country to have any apprehension upon that subject. He did not, therefore, look with any degree of jealousy at such combinations, but he did object to put any restraint on the funds of the working classes. The Act formerly passed to regulate friendly societies, had had the effect of reducing the number of the societies by one-half, in consequence of the trouble and expense which it brought upon them; for, instead of an expense of one guinea, as the House had anticipated in passing the Bill, an expense varying from three to seven guineas was necessary before the societies could comply with the regulations required by the Act. The consequence had been, that thousands—and he spoke advisedly—that thousands of these societies had been destroyed by that Act. With respect to the capacity of the working classes to manage their own affairs, he believed, if they picked out 500 gentlemen and 500 artizans, they would find the latter fully as capable as the former of attending to their own concerns. What he objected to was, the circumstance that Magistrates were to have the power of appointing Treasurers to these societies, who were to be enabled to prevent the application of the funds to any but charitable purposes.

Mr. *Thomas Attwood* opposed that part of the proposition of the hon. Gentleman which went to enable and induce the labouring classes to invest their joint money in the public funds. Such a proceeding on their part, would, in his opinion, be highly dangerous. There were already 270,000 distinct proprietors of stock; added to which there were about 270,000 families having money in the savings' banks, besides numerous friendly societies, all of whom had their property invested in the public funds. If to these were added the parties to whom the hon. Member's proposition applied, the consequence would be, that Government would hold a terrific partnership with almost the whole of the working classes, whom they would thus be enabled to scourge at their pleasure. He was the more solicitous on this point, as he was convinced that the division of last night had sapped the foundation of the public funds. He was sure of it; he was sure that that division rendered the whole foundation of the national debt rotten and unsafe; and, he would, therefore, not give his countenance to a manœuvre which would induce the lower classes to place the savings of their industry on so precarious a footing. He was persuaded that the truth of what he had been observing would be made manifest, and that at no very distant period.

Mr. *John Maxwell* felt that, what was called Peel's Bill, had given the public creditor a greater advantage than he was justly entitled to; and what rendered that effect more objectionable was, that since the passing of that measure, the wages of the working classes had fallen one half. He heartily approved of the proposition of the hon. member for Shrewsbury; and should be very happy to see the people, instead of losing the Mondays, and sometimes the Tuesdays of every week, working hard for twelve hours every day, in order to lay by something for old age, and to prevent incurring the degradation of a recourse to the Poor-rates. The hon. member for Middlesex had very properly discriminated between unjust combination, and that union of any branch of the labouring classes which might enable them to sell their labour to the best advantage. Although he voted last night for the proposition of the hon. member for Whitehaven, yet he thought that the noble Chancellor of the Exchequer was perfectly justified by his official character in resisting that proposition. The noble Lord's motion, however, on that subject, as a Minister, was, in his (Mr. Maxwell's) opinion, perfectly reconcileable with his doing every thing in his power to support the working classes, and assisting to give them an interest in the public funds.

Mr. *Cutlar Fergusson* said, that the discussion had been altogether diverted from the proposition now before the House. He was sorry to hear the hon. member for Birmingham take that opportunity to recur to the debate of last night, and to give it as his opinion that the funds did not rest upon as secure a foundation as they did previous to the vote of the House last night. If the hon. Member had, in the course of the day, consulted any man of knowledge and business in the city of London on the subject, he would find that the very reverse was the fact—he would find that the consequence of the vote of last night was, that the funds were more secure now than ever—and that, instead of resting upon a rotten foundation, as he would insinuate, they were now one hundredfold more secure than they would have been if the motion of the hon. member for Whitehaven had been carried. He was sorry, he repeated, that the hon. member for Birmingham had endeavoured, on this occasion, to throw discredit upon the public funds. He would give his cordial support to the Bill now before the House. He could not avoid making the few observations which he had made in consequence of what had fallen from the hon. member for Birmingham respecting the vote of last night—a vote that he was sure would be considered by the country as rendering more secure the property of every man in it.

Mr. *Slaney* disclaimed any intention of proposing that the individuals in question should not invest their money as they chose, or should not draw it out when they liked. The object of his proposition was, to give them a better security than they now enjoyed.

Leave given to bring in the Bill.

Election by Ballot.] The Speaker called upon Mr. Grote to bring forward his Motion on the Ballot.

Mr. *Philpotts* begged leave to be allowed that opportunity of presenting a Petition, most numerously and respectably signed, from Gloucester, which was intimately connected with the hon. Member's Motion.—The following petition was accordingly presented and read.

To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom in Parliament assembled. The humble Petition of the undersigned Electors and Inhabitants of Gloucester,

Showeth,—That the oppressive practices of many wealthy and influential persons, resident within this city and in its neighbourhood, since the general election in December last, and during a recent contest for a seat in your honourable House, compel your petitioners to lay before you a statement of their grievances and of their formed opinion, that freedom of election in this place, and, as they fear, throughout the country, can be insured by no other means, than the adoption of the system of the Vote by Ballot.

That your petitioners are not insensible to the truth, that if no other than legitimate influence were exerted, open suffrages would, as the most manly, be the far preferable, mode of exercising the elective franchise. To the desire for change they have been driven, by the acts of men who arrogate to themselves the right, and usurp the power, of controlling the expression of public opinion.

That not only has the intimidation, not unfrequently practised, been resorted to in the inordinate exercise of the rights of creditors, of landlords, of masters, of magistrates, of clergymen, and of public functionaries, but very many tradesmen, dreading great pecuniary losses, and, in some instances, even the ruin of themselves and their families, did not dare, at the recent election, to exercise the rights conferred upon them by the Reform Act, in defiance of the urgent threats of their richer customers, and the avowed adoption, by the Tory party, of a system of dealing exclusively with tradesmen who are accustomed to vote for a Tory candidate, regardless of the injuries thus inflicted upon respectable men, for no other cause than their acting upon their own opinions. That this latter species of oppression, as it cannot constitutionally be encountered by any legal restriction, or penal enactment, is an evil, for which your petitioners perceive no other remedy than the introduction of the Ballot.

Though gross bribery has been practised at the recent contest, and though the Ballot is an undoubted means of preventing that crime, yet, inasmuch as the law, in that respect, though not sufficiently strict, is, when enforced, very penal towards offenders, your petitioners do not deem it necessary to draw the attention of your honourable House more expressly to that subject; feeling, however, that the poorer classes of the community require protection against a sort of oppression which cannot be included within the precise legal definition of any crime.

Your petitioners humbly pray, that your honourable House will be pleased to protect every man in the due exercise of his constitutional rights, by passing a bill for taking votes by Ballot, at the elections of Members of Parliament for cities and boroughs."

Mr. *Grote* then spoke as follows;*—Sir,—I rise to submit to you the Motion of which I have given notice, respecting the mode of taking votes at elections for Members of Parliament: and I do so with peculiar satisfaction and encouragement, after the very weighty petition which has just been presented. It is my intention to move that the votes be taken by Ballot, instead of openly.

Aware, as I am, of the interest which this question excites amongst many of your constituencies, in all parts of the country, I could have wished that it had been taken up by some gentleman abler and more practised in the business of this House, than I can boast of being. But though many persons might be found better qualified to do justice to the subject, there is none who takes in it a warmer or a deeper interest. My conviction of the necessity of a secret suffrage, and of the gross mischiefs inseparable from an open suffrage, is now of long standing: and all subsequent reflection upon the matter—all enlarged acquaintance with the detail of elections—has only tended to confirm and corroborate that opinion.

But, Sir, though I feel strongly the importance of the change which I am urging, I should have hesitated in bringing it forward, if it had violated or contravened in any way the principles of the great measure of Reform passed last year—a measure to which I cannot allude without my humble tribute of gratitude and admiration. The noble Lord who first brought forward the measure, in 1831, glanced in his opening speech at the question of the Ballot, with the express view of stating that he pronounced no opinion either for or against it, and that it must be reserved for consideration at some more appropriate season. He thus left the Ballot undecided, and on neutral ground; and I even presume to say that the question now stands on a more favourable footing than it did before the passing of the Reform Bill.

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* Reprinted from the corrected edition published by Effingham Wilson, Royal Exchange.

For it is to that bill, Sir, that we owe our emergence from the chaos and the anomalies of the ancient elective system, and the first approach to a real representative government. The legitimate purpose of voting has now been defined and recognized by authority; we know the end which we have to attain, and we can consider deliberately the best means of attaining it. The great decree has gone forth, that nomination shall be for ever extinguished, and representation substituted in its place. The idea of a sham representation is now banished, amidst the disgraces and mischiefs of the past. The noble Lord opposite, in originally proposing the Reform Bill, announced his distinct intention of so constituting this House, as that it should enjoy, and command, and deserve, the confidence of the people. Sir, I honour him for the recognition of this great and glorious end; and not merely for the recognition of it, but for the mighty stride which he has made towards its accomplishment. I gladly join hands with him, and I desire nothing better than the full attainment of the end which he has thus marked out. Let this House bear upon its front the clear impress of the public confidence—let it carry in its fabric and mode of selection, unequivocal evidence that its members, collectively and individually, possess the confidence of the people—let this be assured, and I, for one, shall be amply satisfied.

Sir, it was with reference to this end that you last year re-organized your constituent body; you gave it a new form, you increased it in number, and you distributed it into new classes and detachments. You discarded the ancient constituency, because it was not calculated to secure to you a Legislature possessing the confidence of the people; you created a new constituency, specially adapted for that express object. I call upon you now to review your mode of taking votes upon the same simple, precise, and momentous principle. I call upon you, no less in consistency with your own professed aim, than with a view to the settlement of a most important question, to consider—whether you are most likely to obtain a Legislature possessing the confidence of the people by taking the votes of electors secretly or openly? And further—whether the benefits promised by the Reform Bill may not be intercepted and nullified, by an unwise or mischievous method of taking votes?

You are aware, that secret suffrage is preferred in France, and in twenty out of the twenty-four states of the American Union; open suffrage has been hitherto the practice in your un-reformed parliamentary elections. But, however happily an open suffrage may have chimed in with that borough-holding ascendancy, under which your unreformed Parliament was cast, I think I shall be able to show you, that secret suffrage is the only arrangement compatible with the genius and purposes of Parliament, as it has now been reformed.

Sir, the Reform Bill has given you a numerous and intelligent constituency, amounting perhaps to something near a million of voters. What would have been said, if there had been a clause in the Bill dividing that constituency into two classes: one class, voters *juris sui*,—another class, voters *juris alieni*; one class free, the other subject, voters; the first invested with a will of their own, the second under legal obligation to express only the will of another? What if the Bill had numbered all the tenants on a great man's estate, and all occupiers of houses under him, as so many lip-voters, necessary, indeed, as mechanical instruments for transmitting his will to the hustings, but legally incapable of expressing any other determination than his? What if it had imposed on all clerks, or journeymen, or labourers, the obligation of voting in the way that their masters prescribed, under the sanction of a pecuniary fine in case of disobedience?

Sir, if any one of such enormities had been comprised in the Reform Bill, it would have been torn in pieces amidst the execrations of the whole community. Tories, Whigs, and Radicals, would have denounced it with one unanimous voice; there would not have been one single hand held up, from any political party, in favour of this abolition of the right of private judgment even amongst the humblest portion of the electors. No one would then have talked of the right of the landlord to control the votes of his tenants, in recompense for the permission granted to them of residing upon his land. Every man would have been full of indignation at the bare thought of according a vote without formal liberty of disposing of it.

But it is not by law alone that the freedom of voting can be subverted. That same state of biassed, dependent, and subjugated voting now exists among you, in full malignity, by the mere force of natural causes. What need is there to enact by law, that the landlord shall have power over the vote of his tenant? The landlord has himself the power of enforcing his own dictation, and of inflicting a penalty on disobedience, much more serious than any which the law would provide—ejectment from house and home. What necessity is there to decree, that customers shall have power over the votes of their tradesmen, and employers over the votes of their labourers? The power exists as surely, and the penalty is as imminent and as terrible, whether you legalise it or not.

Now, Sir, if dependence and subjection of votes, when created by law, be thus abhorrent to your feelings, why should the same thing be less abhorrent when it breaks in upon you perforce, without the aid of law? Its mischiefs are precisely the same, whether it be a weed of natural growth, or a poison artificially planted. You are just as much bound to extirpate the weed, as to refrain from planting the poison. It is not the name—it is not the legalised establishment—of dependent voting, which is mischievous. No, it is the thing called dependent, compulsory, spurious voting, which is of such deplorable effect, whether it be of natural growth, or of factitious and intentional creation. What signifies though it be covered with a thin film of freedom, and ushered in with the empty proclamation of "Every voter to do as he pleases"? If, nevertheless, the voting be really under compulsion, you have the same actual mischief to answer for, coupled with an unworthy piece of hypocrisy to screen it from public recognition.

Cast your eyes over your constituency as it now stands, and you will perceive that a very large proportion of them—I may, without exaggeration, say one-half—are unable to call their votes their own. Each man amongst them is so placed as to be liable to suffer, at the hands of some one or some few other parties, pecuniary loss equivalent to a large legal fine, and amounting often to the utmost extremity of injury, if he does not dispose of his vote at their dictation. Some there are amongst the voters thus hardly circumstanced—splendid examples of political virtue—who give an honest vote and incur the full consequent hazard; and the last election has exhibited to us instances of this devoted principle quite sufficient to excite our deepest sympathy. But the larger number of voters are dragged aside and perverted by the successful exertion of ascendancy from without; they give way before an over-ruling destiny, and they stifle the voice of conscience, because it cannot be put forth without hazard and ruin.

Throughout the county elections, you have the landlord putting the word into the mouth of his tenants, for whom they shall vote, and against whom they shall vote. In the towns, you have the rich customers sending round circulars to their tradesmen, and exercising a similar constraint, by plain hints of the impending consequences, if the circular remains unheeded. Gentlemen may, indeed, call these requests: so they may be, perhaps, in the wording, but they are requests with a fearful sting in the tail; they are requests such as those described in the emphatic language of Tacitus: "*Preces erant, sed quibus contradici non poterat.*" In many cases, even the semblance of request is dispensed with; the employer promises away the votes of his labourers without the ceremony of asking them; or a large body of the population of a town are seen signing peremptory declarations of exclusive dealing, thus threatening poverty and ruin to any tradesman whose conscience may lead him to vote against them. All these are manifold results of the same great cause: interference and coercion left open by your present system. Many a voter, too, evades this collision between his duty and his interest, by refusing to register his name or by keeping away from the poll; and you have thus a large self-inflicted disfranchisement, resulting purely from the unguarded condition of the voter.

Now, Sir, I earnestly urge upon you that this dependent and compulsory voting is pregnant with boundless mischief, both public and private. It totally frustrates and subverts the great purpose for which alone voting is useful; for how can you learn from such votes, heartless and stimulated as they are, who it is that really possess the confidence of the people? Nay, more, how can you escape being saddled with legislators who do not possess the confidence of the people, when so many of your voters are constrained to say yes, where they wish to say no? What is the value of a majority of votes obtained by one candidate over another, if half the votes composing that majority are spurious and extorted? Now, if this be really the state of the case, and if, after all, you get a Legislature which does not carry with it the stamp of confidence from the people, I submit to you, that the benefits promised by the Reform Bill are frustrated—your elective system is, to a great extent, a failure and a nullity; for the basis on which the whole elective system rests—the source from which all its virtues are derived—the only characteristic which distinguishes it from a vain mummery—is, the genuine suffrage of each qualified voter.

So much for the public mischiefs of this compulsory voting. Add, besides, the fearful private mischief and immorality accompanying it—the solemn falsehood at the poll, told by the dependent under constraint of his superior—the self abasement in the mind of every one, who thus feels himself degraded into the lifeless instrument of another's will—the apathy and recklessness created, as to political duties in general, when a man cannot give effect to his own resolutions—and the thousand angry feelings which accompany every where the workings of this private terrorism;—sum up all the items in this gloomy catalogue, and you will be convinced that dependent voting is one of the most calamitous of all our national evils.

Now, Sir, whence arises this power of constraining the votes of others, exercised amongst us with such deplorable effect? We need not investigate its various sources, for there is one condition indispensable to its agency—I mean the publicity of votes. However hardly the hand of power may bear on a voter in other ways, it will not reach his vote, if he votes in silence and darkness. Secrecy of voting, and freedom of voting, are necessary and inseparable companions: where the one is, there will the other be also; and conversely, where the one is not, the blessings of the other will never be known.

I know that there are some who dispute whether secrecy really will bestow this freedom. But how can it possibly fail of doing so? How can a man hope to please any one, or fear to offend any one, by an act unseen, unknown, uncognizable, by any one but himself. Imagine the elector alone in a balloting closet, with his card or ticket in his hand. How can he possibly please any body, by scratching out the name of the wrong candidate? How can he displease any body, by scratching out the name of the right candidate? His vote is in this case, a mere silent thought: an unproclaimed wish, which leaves no memorial behind it. Can a man be either rewarded or punished for an untold secret of this kind? No, Sir, it is the commonest of all proverbs, that thought is free; and the unheard expressions of thought are just as much beyond the reach of human coercion or revenge, as thought itself.

Gentlemen do indeed argue, that though an elector's vote may be concealed, his political feelings will be known from other evidences. Suppose they are known: I contend that his vote will be just as much emancipated as if they were not known. He may be punished or rewarded for any overt expression of his sentiments; he cannot be punished or rewarded for his unseen vote. I, as a landlord, may, if I please, eject a tenant for real or suspected political sentiments; but I cannot eject him for an unknown vote, and, therefore, I cannot create in him any motive to vote against his conscience. This is the direct and specific virtue of the Ballot, that it destroys all motive for an elector to falsify his sentiments at the poll, because, under no circumstances can he attract favour or avert injury by doing so. Nobody will give him credit for a vote contrary to his sentiments, when nobody can possibly know how his vote was really given.

Sir, I do not assert that the Ballot, directly and of itself, will put an end to all persecution for political sentiment expressed elsewhere, but I do assert, that it will put an end to compulsory and insincere voting. You cannot have forgotten the analogous case of France. To every one who has followed the eventful course of affairs in that country, during the last ten years, it is notorious, that the Ballot proved the single guarantee, but the all-sufficient guarantee, against an overwhelming Government ascendancy. This is a matter confessed by all parties, friends as well as enemies; indeed the shameless efforts of the Bourbon Government, to elude or nullify the Ballot in practice, plainly proved how well they knew and felt its influence. I do not presume to cite the case of France in proof of the goodness of the Ballot, but I do cite that case confidently in proof of its efficacy in shielding the voter from all undue compulsion. I rely, Sir, fully and surely, on the Ballot, as an effective bar against intimidation and coercion of votes: I rely on it, too, as going far to preclude bribery, much farther than any penal enactment which can now be devised—for it cannot be unknown to those who hear me, that there is no case in which the lame foot of justice finds greater difficulty in overtaking the doublings of crime, than in investigations of bribery. Under the Ballot, individual bribery could have no place: for no man would buy that which he could have no assurance of obtaining; but there is, undoubtedly, a sort of wholesale or collective bribery which might still remain practicable. A man may offer a sum of money, to be distributed among the aggregate of the voters of any place, conditionally upon his being returned Member. But it is to be recollected, that this is a transaction not a little hazardous, and very likely to bring about an exposure; so that the Ballot will at least render bribery much more difficult, much more complicated, and much more dangerous, to the parties concerned. Moreover, I beg to remind you, that for one vote perverted by bribery, there are twenty perverted by intimidation.

Others, again, there are who object to the Ballot, not on the score of inefficacy, but from pure dislike of secrecy in general. It leads (they tell you) to mendacity and promise-breaking: for a tenant, after having promised his vote to his superior, may break his promise with impunity, and vote against him at the poll.

Now, Sir, it is very true that a tenant, voting by Ballot, may thus break his promise: But why should you suppose that he will do so? There can be but one answer: because the promise has been given contrary to his genuine and conscientious feeling. In no other case can he be tempted to violate it. For had it been given of his own free-will, and coincident with his judgment and conscience, he would feel pleasure in performing it, and pain in violating it, whether performance were open or secret. The mere supposition, therefore, that the voter will be disposed to break his promise, implies that he has promised contrary to his genuine inclination, and therefore by some extraneous force or compulsion. It is from these compulsory promises alone that the chance of promise-breaking arises.

Let any man just contemplate the nature of this compulsory promise, and mark what is involved in it. Preferring A in his conscience, the elector has been constrained to promise, that he will vote for B; he has promised to give an insincere and dishonest vote—to tell a known and deliberate lie at the poll. A promise, like this, involves the necessity of lying, one way or the other: either to his country, if he keeps the promise, or to his superior, if he breaks it. But what falsehood can be worse than a dishonest vote at the poll? Is it not a falsehood told under the most awful circumstances—told, too, in express violation of a solemn trust towards his country, which calls upon him to speak the truth? What comments do you make upon a juror who gives a dishonest verdict, or upon a witness who knowingly deposes an untruth in open Court? You treat them as vile and dishonoured outcasts, and you treat them justly. Yet note well, that if these judicial trust-breakers sin in poisoning the fountains of justice, the electoral trust-breaker sins scarcely less in poisoning the fountains of legislation.

I take great pains, Sir, to present to you forcibly this horn of the dilemma, because gentlemen are very fond of dwelling exclusively upon the other. They talk as if the only falsehood which a voter could tell, and the only wrong which he could commit, were, the breaking faith with one who had extorted from him a dishonest promise. I maintain, that there is another and a greater wrong which he may commit—the breaking faith with the public; and further, that one of the two he infallibly must commit, if he has given a promise of this kind. In the eyes of this House, especially, as the recognized guardian of the public interest, the performance of a public trust must be the first of all things to be enforced, in spite of any pledge to the contrary, by which the trustee may choose privately to bind himself. You will condemn and censure him for entering into so criminal a covenant; but you will not permit him to make the immorality of the covenant an excuse for the still greater immorality of violating his trust. I am almost ashamed, Sir, to load you with illustrations of a principle so obvious, but suppose that I engage, as juror or as witness, to find an unjust verdict, or to bear false testimony—am I to be held bound, or am I even authorized, to commit the iniquity to which I stand pledged? Not if I have promised it ever so broadly and unequivocally. The promise is bad enough; the act would be far worse. I will, with your permission, read half-a-dozen lines from Shakspeare, which set this truth in a striking point of view:

It is great sin to swear unto a sin,
But greater still to keep a sinful oath.
Who can be bound by any solemn vow
To do a murderous deed, to rob a man,
To force a spotless virgin's chastity,
To reave the orphan of his patrimony,

To wring the widow from her customed right;
And have no other reason for his wrong,
But that he was bound by a solemn oath?

These lines are no less exact than forcible. I value, as highly as any man, the sanctity of a promise; but promise-keeping is only one amongst many various and important duties, and whenever a more commanding obligation intervenes, the breach of the promise becomes a duty, and the observance of it a sin.

Now, Sir, the very worst effect which the Ballot can produce is to enable these compulsory and immoral promises to be violated with impunity. But it neither will, nor can, create any additional breach of faith, over and above what there would be under open voting. In one case, the voter breaks faith with his country; in the other case, with his private superior. Take it at the worst, the Ballot gets rid of the more noxious lie of the two, and substitutes a lie more harmless and excusable.

But this is not the fair way of appreciating the effects of secret voting. For I contend that the compulsory and dishonest promises, from whence alone lying proceeds, will seldom or never be exacted. For where is the advantage of forcing a man to promise against his inclination, when you cannot force him to keep his promise? To tie a man down by a hateful pledge, against which his conscience kicks and struggles, when you cannot by any means ascertain whether he keeps his promise or not, seems little better than a fruitless affront; tending only to rouse in the mind of the dependent all the galling ideas of coercion, without strengthening your real hold over his conduct. Therefore, I infer, that it will seldom or never be done. By depriving the superior of the power to extort a vote, we shall deprive him of the motive to extort a promise. No promises will be asked or given, except those which coincide with the voter's inclination; and there is no fear that promises of this kind should ever be broken.

Here, Sir, you have the final result of all this promise-breaking and mendacity which the Ballot is pretended to entail upon us. It is purely fanciful and gratuitous. But let me ask, is there no promise-breaking now, under open voting? Why, there is scarcely a single election-contest which does not exhibit, not only compulsory promise-making, but compulsory promise-breaking, in abundance. Does it not eternally happen that a dependent is compelled by his superior to break a promise which he has voluntarily made to another? I have already shown you that the Ballot will put an end to compulsory promises: I now show you that it will put an end to compulsory violations of previous promises, and this at least you will admit to be of serious moment.

But the more you look at the subject, Sir, the less you will be disposed to connect secret voting with falsehood and duplicity, or open voting with frankness and ingenuousness. Speaking in a whisper is not synonymous with lying: much less is speaking aloud synonymous with openness of heart and truth-telling. There are cases, no doubt, in which secrecy is conducive to fraud and deception: but there are also cases in which it is the only sure road to the truth. Where a man is called as a witness, to depose to facts, or to recount actual events, there it is essential that his testimony should be delivered in public; for it is only by a public hearing, that you can procure the opportunity of confronting him with others who may have been cognizant of the same facts. But where you want to learn from a man, not any matters of fact, but simply his own private judgment and opinion, of which no one can be cognizant except himself—where, besides, he has no motive of his own to deceive you—there you are much more likely to hear the truth by making his communication strictly confidential. It perpetually happens in private life, that you have occasion to ascertain the opinion of A or B, respecting the integrity, or the skill, or the commercial solvency of C or D: and every man to whom this necessity occurs, knows well that the only way to get a frank and genuine opinion is, to put the question in strict privacy and confidence.

Now, Sir, this is precisely the situation of an elector at the poll. You do not want to learn from him any facts; you want to know his opinion with regard to the merits of the candidates on the list, of which no one can be cognizant except himself. He has no motive to tell you wrong; and if he does tell you wrong, it can only be by the force of some compulsion acting upon him from without. What, then, is the rule which prudence prescribes? To make his communication perfectly confidential, and to let him see that he has nothing to fear from disclosing to you unreservedly the state of his conscience. By rendering the suffrage secret, you will be sure to hear the truth, and nothing but the truth.

numerous, and the success, at best, uncertain: to the rich man the path is certain and easy—the willing public meet him half way, and joyfully hail the gradual opening of his virtues. He is the man to whom they delight to pay homage; and their idolatrous fancy forestalls and exaggerates his real merits.

This, Sir, is, in my opinion, the legitimate influence of wealth and station; to serve as the passport, the ally, and the handmaid, of superior worth and talent. This influence is as gentle and kindly as it is lasting and infallible; it is self-created and self-preserving; and it is, moreover, twice blest, for it blesses as well the few who exercise it, as the many over whom it is exercised. If our great and wealthy men would be content with this legitimate influence—if they could employ their superior opportunities in the display of those qualities which really fit them for guides and governors—then would their ascendancy be assured beyond all competition, under any conceivable system of election, rare or frequent, secret or open.

But, Sir, it is the curse and misery of our species, that the great and wealthy men, both here and elsewhere, will seldom be satisfied to pursue this straight and righteous path to dominion. They seek to play the prime parts among mankind, without any display of those commanding qualities which make mankind willing to acknowledge and submit to them. 'Diversissimas res—to use the words of Sallust—" diversissimas res pariter expectant—ignaviæ voluptatem, et præmia virtutis." They choose to govern by mere dint of wealth and station, unallied with those beneficent ingredients, which bestow upon rulers an empire over human hearts as well as over human persons. Then comes the strain and tug, to make the influence of wealth alone, in worthless and ungifted hands, a substitute for that of wealth and personal merit united. Wealth alone, in any hands, carries with it the power of befriending one man, and injuring another; it will not indeed procure for its possessor the heartfelt esteem of a willing public, but it will at least enable him to purchase the simulated demonstrations of esteem, and to extort those votes which he has not virtue enough to earn. This, Sir, is the illegitimate influence of wealth and station—when it supersedes and disenthrones the diviner qualities of the man and the hero—when the favours and injuries which it deals out are made to stand in the place of talents and virtues, and to usurp that recompense which the people delight to bestow upon the glorious compound of superior worth and worldly station.

Now, when I am asked whether the Ballot will abridge the influence of wealth and wealthy men, I reply, that in all those cases in which such influence is really legitimate and beneficial, not only it will not be abridged, but it will be materially strengthened and exalted. Under open voting, the influence of wealth is alike in every hand—alike, whether combined with exemplary merit, or with worthlessness and mediocrity. Ejectment of tenants—privation of custom—dismissal from employment—all these miserable weapons may be employed alike by the best and by the worst—nay, the worse a man is, the more effectively will he employ them, since he will be less restrained by scruples of justice or tenderness. You thus have the hurtful influence of wealth strained to its utmost pitch, while the salutary influence is counteracted and enfeebled, at the least, if not entirely trodden out.

But the Ballot, Sir, decomposes this confused heap of good and evil, with the exactness of a chemical agent. It banishes from the voter's mind both the hope of favour and the fear of injury; but that affectionate and willing homage, which wealth, combined with superior merit, so infallibly awakens, is left in full empire over his heart, and becomes the determining principle of his vote. Fear not, Sir, that the man who employs wealth and station as they ought to be employed, in elevating his own character, and in affording conspicuous evidences of active philanthropy—fear not, that such a man should lose one particle of influence by means of the Ballot. His standard is planted in the interior of men's bosoms; his ascendancy is as sure and as operative in the dark as in the light; his recommendations need no coercive force to ensure obedience. And what harm would ensue, if that coarser and baser influence, which cannot subsist without coercive force, were suppressed and extirpated altogether?—if the worthless and unfurnished minds, who are now enabled to dictate commands to an array of timorous dependents, were compelled to restrict their influence within the narrower limits of persuasion and good-will?

I contend that not only no harm would ensue, but very great good would ensue; in this, as well as in other ways, that it will so materially strengthen the motive for men of wealth and station to extend their knowledge and to enlarge there sphere of practical usefulness. As matters stand now, a man's influence is in the ratio of his wealth; it signifies not whether his character be good or bad, whether his capacity be vast or limited: in either case, his power over the comforts of others, and his consequent means of perverting their votes, are equal. So long as he can thus command votes he has no motive to earn esteem or admiration. But, if their votes were rendered free instead of servile—genuine instead of simulated—then he could only hope to obtain them by really deserving them; then would he have a powerful motive to attract to himself those heartfelt sentiments from whence alone free-spoken votes proceed. The question has been started by an esteemed author, (Bishop Berkeley) "Whether an uneducated gentry are not the greatest of all national evils?" Certainly, if not the greatest, they are amongst the greatest, of national evils; nor is the counterpart of the proposition less true.—That a gentry well-educated and of enlarged sympathies with the people, are among the foremost of all national blessings. I am sure, Sir, that the most effectual way of preserving to ourselves that blessing, will be to render the vote of an elector inaccessible to all coercion, and attainable only by such as shall have earned his genuine esteem. This is the only prize which can stimulate the listlessness, or soften the natural pride, of one whose wealth places him above the equal communion of his fellow-men; and by rendering the suffrage secret, you lock this precious prize in a casket, which can neither be stolen by fraud, nor ravished by tyranny; you reserve it in the inmost sanctuary, as a free-will offering to ascertained merit, and as a stimulus to all noble aspirations.

I have thus, Sir, exhibited the reasons which demonstrate to my mind the urgent necessity of the vote by Ballot; the proof is in my view quite conclusive and unanswerable. I have examined, too, at some length, the principal arguments urged against the Ballot, and I have shown you, that even the firmest of them are either founded in misapprehension, or are outweighed, a thousand times over, by the inestimable blessings of free and genuine voting.

I might now rest my cause on the simple strength of reasoning, and I fear not the sharpest assaults of sophistry or prejudice against it. But, Sir, I should not do justice to the subject, if I did not lay it before you with all the affecting circumstances which naturally and intrinsically belong to it. If ever there was a case in which the address to your reason was vehemently and powerfully seconded by the appeal to your feelings, that case is the emancipation of honest voters—the making peace between a man's duty and his worldly cares—the rescue of political morality from the snares which now beset it, and from the storms which now lay it prostrate. You are called upon to protect the rights, and to defend the integrity of the electoral conscience; to shield the innocent from persecution at the hands of the guilty; to guard the commonwealth against innumerable breaches of trust, committed by the reluctant hands of well-meaning citizens. You are called upon to bridle the tyranny of those who violate, by the same blow, their duty to their neighbour and their duty to their country. You are called upon to encourage the formation of an electoral conscience in those bosoms where it has as yet had no existence; and to cure that recklessness and immorality with which unprincipled voters now prostitute their franchise, in order to conciliate custom or promotion. Above all, you are called upon to make this House, what it professes and purports to be, a real emanation from the pure and free-spoken choice of the electors; an assembly of men commanding the genuine esteem and confidence of the people, and consisting of persons, the fittest which the nation affords, for executing the true end and aim of government. When all these vast interests, collective and individual, are at stake in this one measure, am I not justified in demanding from you not merely a cold and passive attention, but an earnest sympathy and solicitude?

Recollect again and again, Sir, what class of men it is whose protection is most immediately and prominently the object of my proposition. It is the poorer and humbler half of the aggregate constituent body; and more especially those among them who unite the conscience of a citizen and a patriot with the anxious industry of a virtuous domestic man. It is these men, especially, whose cause I now plead—and a nobler body of clients the world does not comprise. Suppose them admitted to address you, and to state their case in person —"You have given us," they would respectfully urge, "a sacred privilege, that of selecting men fit to make laws for ourselves and our fellow-countrymen. We know the value of that privilege, and we prize it among the most precious jewels of our earthly lot. We know, also, the duty which it entails upon us, and we are disposed to fulfil that duty with the utmost exactness and rigour. But with all possible purity of intention, we find it often totally impossible—always distressing and hazardous—to execute the duty consigned to us. We are tempted and threatened on every side, to induce us to forfeit our trust; we see others who forfeit their trust without compunction, thriving and prosperous; we are oftentimes so hemmed in by conflicting motives, by private ruin as opposed to public probity, that we know not which duty is to be preferred—our duty to our country on the one side, or our duty to our families on the other. All this temptation and conflict arises from the knowledge which you allow the enemy and the oppressor to obtain, of the way in which we vote. Deprive him of this knowledge, and his power of constraint is annihilated. Collect our opinions confidentially and in private, where the spies of the enemy cannot penetrate, and where the sound of his wrath cannot be heard. You wish to know our real opinions; we wish to communicate them to you; and all we ask is, to be enabled to communicate them without fear, without disturbance, and without uneasiness."

This, Sir, is a simple and faithful summary of the condition, the wishes, and the apprehensions, of thousands among your best and purest citizens. Are the prayers wicked, are they indecorous, are they extravagant, that you should repudiate them without ceremony, and leave the oppressors unchecked, and the sufferers unprotected?

You may so repudiate them—you may leave the mischief still rankling—but how will such a negative be received in the country? What lesson will it convey to the poorer classes in general, when they see the Legislature thus sport with their consciences, and turn a deaf ear to their difficulties and persecutions? Be assured, that they will not recognize in your refusal the even-handed ministration of a Legislature which "careth for all alike." They will see in it, and they cannot help seeing, a fatal evidence of your disposition to uphold the ascendancy of the rich, however oppressive or demoralizing—to sanction the full dominion of landlords over their tenants, as electors—and to erect every great estate into an electoral jurisdiction, subject to the control and dictation, and arbitrary penalties of the proprietor; while the vote nominally bestowed on the tenant is mere mockery and delusion.

Believe me, Sir, you cannot pronounce this harsh sentence, without fatally alienating from you the affections of the poorer voters, nor without widening the gap, already but too inauspicious, between the richer and the poorer classes in this community. I am one of those who look with dismay at any occurrence which tends to undermine the respect for property—not for the larger heaps of property more than for the smaller, but for every man's earnings and every man's inheritance. There is in each person's mind a natural tendency to respect the inestimable institution of property, unless where accidental causes occur to alienate him from it; and amongst these various counteracting causes, there is not one to which history bears such constant testimony—there is not one which works with such disastrous effect—as the exercise of unjust and iniquitous privileges by the possessors of the conspicuous fortunes. I would urge upon you most particularly this momentous consideration, when you are dealing with the signal abuse which I have this day denounced to you. Be assured that the reverence for property cannot be what it ought to be, so long as your rich men are allowed to subjugate the humbler electors—so long as every poor man who dares to have a conscience is compelled to look upon them with enmity and terror. Prohibit this unholy aggression on the one part; efface the sinister feelings to which it gives rise on the other. Let your rich men, if they will do nothing better or more glorious, at least enjoy their enviable position in peace and innocence; if they will not inspire gratitude and admiration, let them at least refrain from exciting fear and hatred; let them not play the inquisitor and the dragon in the poor man's cottage, and ravish from him by force the precious jewel of citizenship.

This, Sir, is little enough to demand from them; far less than I would wish to obtain. For, if I durst whisper in their ears as their suggesting genius, I would animate them to far higher and nobler ends; I would entreat them to employ their superior leisure and opportunities in qualifying themselves for all those commanding functions which naturally devolve to them; I would implore them not to rest contented without the heartfelt esteem and the grateful admiration of the public, for whom they are born; I would beseech them, in the language of Milton,

"With winning words to conquer willing hearts,
And make persuasion do the work of fear."

This is the divine sceptre which lies within their reach, if their hearts were set and their minds were worthy to grasp it. But look not for any change in their dispositions, until the ways of force and coercion are for ever barred against them. Therefore, Sir, I repeat again, grant us the all-sufficient protection of the Ballot—chase away at once the accursed demon of compulsion, and make room for the paternal and kindly empire of wisdom and beneficence.

I conclude by moving, "that it is expedient that the votes at elections for Members of Parliament be taken by way of Ballot."

Sir *William Ingilby* seconded the Motion, and he did so because he had within the last six months witnessed the baneful effects of the present system of voting. Nothing could be worse or more corrupt than the way in which the elective franchise was now used. The voter was placed at the mercy of the country attorney and the steward of the squire, and these persons were more dreaded than the squire himself, or even the parson. All sorts of means were resorted to by the attorney and the steward to compel the unfortunate voter to support any candidate they pleased; and he would read to the House a sample of the letters which persons of this description sent round to intimidate the electors over whom their influence extended on such occasions—(the hon. Baronet then read a letter which he said had been written by a country attorney to a farmer, stating that by an act of George 3rd, no persons were allowed to vote at elections but freeholders, and that any person who voted without being duly qualified was subject to serious pains and penalties). The time had arrived when such a system of intimidation should be put an end to. The system of canvassing at the recent general election had done immense mischief. There was at that time a religious crusade throughout the country. He knew nothing more likely to bring the clergy into disrepute than their interfering at elections; and if it were for no other reason than that he wished to preserve them from falling into odium among the people, he should vote in favour of this Motion. He spoke with regret of any thing that was likely to be injurious to the character of the clergy, being himself almost part and parcel of the Church. He most cordially seconded the Motion.

The Earl of *Darlington* was surprised and disappointed to find that although the representation was now completely amended—although the people now really had a voice in that House—yet that there should be still such a spirit of restlessness that many persons would not be satisfied till all the institutions which were old were brought to an end. The object of this Motion was to throw into the hands of the democracy a greater degree of weight, and a degree of power, than was consistent with the well-being of other classes in the State. He certainly must oppose the views of the hon. Member who proposed the Motion, as he did not wish the object of that Motion to be attained. If the Reform Act had not been passed, he might have been in favour of the Motion. So long as the former state of things continued, there might be some reason for the Ballot, because the smallness of the constituency might enable a powerful individual to influence them; but that was no longer the case—the constituencies now were too numerous and powerful to be thus influenced. The events of the two last years had rendered the Motion totally unnecessary. He was, therefore, surprised that the hon. Member should, upon the very first day of the Session, have given notice of this Motion, before it was possible that he or any one else could have had any experience of the composition and character of the Reformed House of Commons. With the feelings of an Englishman he protested against this secret and unmanly mode of voting. Every change in the institutions of a country was in itself an evil as a change, and ought not to be adopted unless there was some accompanying benefit. He did not think that any public benefit could arise from this change. The main argument in its favour was, that an honest voter might, from his situation in life, be at present unable to give his vote according to his opinion, and this scheme was to enable him to do so. Before, however, the change would be made, it should be inquired, would it be effectual. It was well known, that in contested elections all the electors were canvassed by influential persons, to whom they were all known; and suppose they promised their vote in accordance with their interest, and afterwards violated that promise, was it possible that they should long remain unknown to the persons they attempted to deceive?

The Ballot was generally called for by the lower orders, and by few others. Notwithstanding all that was said of its purity, he thought it was intended to cloak an attack on property. Suppose a tenant promised to vote for his landlord and voted against him; he would probably be suspected—or what was still worse, his innocent neighbour might suffer for his falsehood. Was it desirable that men should make a promise with one hand and break it with the other? Would not such a system demoralize the lower orders? It would tend to destroy the honourable confidence between man and man, and would make all men look with jealousy upon each other. Besides, he did not believe it was necessary. Property gave power, and while it was exercised with discretion it was a public good. He must admit, that amongst the rich as well as amongst the poor there were bad as well as good; but certainly the power of the rich was generally exercised for the public good. If it were improperly exercised it was to be corrected not by this scheme of the Ballot, but by the remedy of public opinion: and he believed that there was nothing so corrupt in the framework of society as to render such a remedy hopeless. Suppose the labourer, a 10*l.* voter, was freed from the control of his landlord or employer, could he be freed from the control of an agitator or of public meetings? Suppose a body of 1,000 electors—which, he would ask, was likely to be most for the public good, that they should express the opinion of an agitator in one mass, or that they should, in classes express the opinion, of the several persons who exercised the influence of property over them. However good the Ballot might be in a republic, he thought it was utterly incompatible with a Constitutional Monarchy, for a Constitutional Monarchy could not exist at the same time with a perfect equality of rights; and he believed that those who supported the Ballot desired this perfect equality. He had always been a supporter of a Constitutional Monarchy, and he did not wish to see the introduction of anything that would tend to destroy it. He, therefore, should always oppose the Ballot; particularly as it would change the frankness of character by which the English voter was now distinguished, for guile, hypocrisy, and fraud.

Mr. *Peter*: Sir, respecting, as I long have done, the talents of the hon. Member who has brought this Motion before the House, and grateful, as I must ever feel to him, for his long and uniform exertion of those talents, in the cause of liberty and Reform, it is not without diffidence and regret that I find myself compelled to stand forward as one of his opponents on the present occasion. Sir, I need not assure the hon. Gentleman that I have listened to his arguments with all the attention which their own intrinsic value, no less than the importance of the subject on which they have been urged, so justly demands. But, Sir, great as the ability—great as the ingenuity displayed by the hon. Gentleman, he has failed to convince me either of the justice or expediency of the proposed measute—a measure, which, far from promising any of the advantages which he so fondly anticipates, would, I am confident, but introduce new evils into our elective system, and go far to undo the good, and to defeat the very end and object, of all our labours in the cause of Reform. Sir, in considering the proposition which has been made by the hon. Gentleman, the first objection which arises in my mind, and which must naturally occur to all who have heard him, is, that it is unseasonable—that it is premature. Surrounded as we are by so many subjects of the most pressing importance—by the questions of Tithes, Church Reform, Colonial Slavery, the Bank and East-India Charters—all calling for immediate inquiry and decision—and ere the Act which the hon. Gentleman proposes to alter is twelve months old—ere the vessel of State can be said to have been safely moored within its promised haven, or ere its crew has had time to look around and to explore the long-sought-for land—lo! we are, all hands, called on again to weigh anchor—to embark in this polar voyage—to launch forth, without pilot or compass, into the dark ocean of disputed theory and undiscovered Reform.

Now, Sir, without meaning to say, that the measure so recently passed into law is perfect in all its parts, or that it may not admit of amendments—still, I would contend, that any alteration, at the present moment, would be inconsiderate and premature. Though changes are often necessary, yet change is not, in itself, a good. "Experiments," (to use the words of a wise and great man) — "Experiments should not be tried in States, except the necessity be urgent, or the utility evident." It should be "the Reformation that draweth on the change, and not the desire of change, that pretendeth the Reformation." In contending for Reform, we contended for it as a means of good Government—as a means of insuring the greatest happiness to the greatest number. Let us, therefore, before we advance further—let us see how far the means which have been adopted, are likely to prove adequate to the attainment of the desired end. Let us, at least—before we make further changes—pause and consider, whether the great change which has been already effected, is not, in itself, sufficient for every purpose of liberty and good Government—whether the House of Commons, as newly amended and remodelled by the Reform Act, does not now represent the people, and whether it does not promise to secure to them as much real good—as much practical freedom and happiness—as could be hoped for from any other system of representation, however specious in theory, or even uncontradicted in practice. In all great works of practical Reform, there is not less wisdom in knowing where to stop than when to begin. Could France have been aware of this truth in 1789, or even in 1791—could her constituent assembly have paused in its career of change—could its leaders, instead of being borne away headlong in the popular tide, have stopped and looked around to discover "the straight and right way," what crimes, what miseries might have been prevented—what wars, what sufferings, what destruction, might have been averted from that unhappy country, and from all Europe!

But, Sir, to come to the question more immediately before the House, what is it that the hon. Gentleman has asked for? He has asked for the Ballot—for a law to dispense with the responsibility of all electors, by enabling them to give their votes at elections in privacy and darkness! And this in the nineteenth century! This at a time when the universal feelings of mankind call aloud for publicity—for publicity—increased publicity in all affairs of Government, in all debates and votes of Parliament, in all tribunals of law and justice, in all county and local proceedings—at a time, Sir, I repeat when publicity is called for in all things, in all places, in all departments of Church and State, and when public opinion may be said to have been constituted, with consent of all, supreme arbitress of human conduct and affairs, and to sit, as it were, "crowning good, and repressing ill;" this is the time at which it has been thought necessary to introduce the Ballot—this is the time at which it has been deemed expedient to propose a law for exempting all electors from responsibility and control, and for allowing one of the most solemn trusts, one of the most sacred and important duties that can devolve upon the citizens of a free State, and on the faithful discharge of which the peace, the liberty, and the happiness of the whole community so vitally depend, to be performed under the shroud of darkness, and in the mask of night! And on what plea, on what pretence, is this proposition introduced? Under the pretext of protecting liberty! As if liberty needed such defence—as if liberty feared the light—as if liberty ever did, ever could, flourish in darkness! No, Sir, liberty needs no such defence, she needs no ambushments, no policies, no stratagems, to make her victorious over her enemies. Let her and tyranny grapple, and who ever knew liberty put to the rout, in free and open encounter?

But, Sir, the hon. Gentleman tells us that great evils, that great abuses prevail under the system of open voting. Be it so; still I would contend that it is not every partial grievance, it is not every occasional evil, that can warrant the overthrow of a whole system, that can justify so great a change as that which the hon. Gentleman requires in our elective constitution. Great national questions must be determined on general grounds. Political wisdom consists not in perpetually altering the machine of Government, not in perpetually encumbering its wheels with new contrivances to obviate every partial inconvenience, but rather I should say in removing the obstacles that impede its course. Admitting, as I do, the existence of many of the evils complained of—still, I would put it to the hon. Gentleman, and I would entreat him to consider—whether they might not all be cured by some simpler and more Constitutional, and less costly remedy than by that of the Ballot.

Could the elective franchise be considered as a private property, could it be considered as a thing given not for the good of the community, but for the personal sake of the holder; then, Sir, perhaps the hon. Gentleman might be right. Or were Suffrage universal, were every individual,—man, woman, and child—entitled to a voice in the election of Representatives; then also might there be some grounds for the hon. Gentleman's arguments; then, Sir, might there be some pretext for releasing electors from the control of public opinion, and for leaving them amenable to the sole tribunal of their own consciences. But, Sir, if the elective franchise be a public property, if it be a trust committed to a given class of individuals for the good of the whole State, for the benefit of the unrepresented, no less than of the represented, part of their fellow-citizens, then, Sir, do I contend that the exercise of it should be public, that it should be open to the scrutiny, and subject to the judgment of the whole community. But, Sir, the hon. Gentleman, though he admits that the elective franchise is a trust, and, as such, that it ought to be exercised for the good of the State, nevertheless contends that such object would be more easily attained—that such trust would be more justly administered by secret than by open suffrage. The great mass of individuals, he says, who compose the elective body, can have no interests inconsistent with those of their country. And why, Sir, may not the same be said, with equal justice, of the nation at large—of the great body of the unrepresented, no less than of the represented, members of the community? Neither of them can, in fact—neither the represented nor the unrepresented can, as a body, have any interests at variance with those of their fellow-citizens. But still, Sir, there are many amongst both, who do not feel or understand this truth, and who, from narrow views, or selfish and corrupt policy, may miscalculate, and thus betray, both their country's interests and their own. Now, under such circumstances, how are these errors and vices of the electors to be corrected or controlled? I reply—by free and open discussion—by the interchange of sentiments with their friends and neighbours—by that influence of public opinion which the ballot would altogether extinguish. Admitting that electors might be, here and there, acted on by corrupt or arbitrary men—by men, having interests opposed to those of the people—yet on which side is the balance most likely to lean? By whom will the great body of electors be most probably influenced? By the threats and bribes of a few unprincipled individuals, or by the free voice and right feeling of the great mass of the community? Sir, it has been said by an eminent philosopher, that—'Nature, when she formed 'man for society, endowed him with a 'desire to please; that she taught him to 'respect the sentiments and judgment of 'his fellow-men, and to feel pleasure in 'their approbation and pain in their dis'approbation.'

Now this, Sir, I believe to be not less true in a political than in a moral point of view. Of all checks on misconduct (religious principle alone excepted)—of all incentives to virtue—of all supports to freedom—I believe public opinion to be the most powerful and effective. It is a great moral tribunal to which the most despotic must bend—which the proudest, the most powerful, the most corrupt, cannot brave with impunity. Sir, it is to this influence —it is to the publicity—to the discussions which prevail in all affairs of general interest, that I do not hesitate to attribute many of our national virtues, and, more particularly, that strict habit of truth which has been described by an illustrious foreigner as one of the most distinguishing features of the English character—a habit which cannot exist but in a country where publicity prevails, and where dissimulation leads to nothing but the mortification of being exposed.

Sir, the hon. Gentleman seems to imagine that there is a magic in the very name of Ballot—that it must at once operate as a spell or charm, to allay all evil passions—to banish all discord and injustice—to make the crooked straight, and the rough even. He seems to imagine that it will check all undue influence and control—that it will even preclude all canvassing and solicitation of votes! But has it done so in elections at the Bank and India House? Has it done so in other ages or in other countries? in the ancient republics of Greece and Rome, or in the modern governments of America and France? The hon. Gentleman has indeed appealed to the two latter in support of his argument; but I contend that neither of them will bear him out. In America, where there are few or no temptations to secrecy, the Ballot is a dead letter—in France, the adoption of it is so recent, that its effects on the moral character and interests of society, remain yet to be developed; but in neither, has it put an end to canvassing and solicitation of votes, which prevail to as great a degree there as in England, or in any other country. Why, then, do we expect miracles from the Ballot here? But what is the promised benefit—what is the expected boon, which the Ballot would confer on the elector? Sir, the only boon—the only possible privilege, which I can conceive it capable of bestowing upon electors would be the privilege of lying with impunity—of taking bribes with less fear of detection—of becoming greater masters and adepts in casuistry and deceit. And this is the boon, this the freedom, which the first Reformed Parliament is to bestow on the people of England.

Sir, I believe it will not be denied, that the characters of nations, no less than of individuals, are, to a great degree, dependent on moral causes, on examples, on circumstances, on institutions. Everything, therefore, that tends to awaken the loftier qualities of our nature—every thing that tends to call forth a manly avowal and exertion of principle, is productive of benefit to society. Examples of moral courage and self-denial—of devotion to our country's weal—of rights bravely asserted, or of duties disinterestedly performed—examples, like these, are never lost, but all tend, sooner or later, to exalt nations, and to bless mankind. But does the Ballot hold out any such incentives? Does a system of secrecy and distrust—a system, which enables a man to promise one thing and to do another with impunity, and perhaps reward—does such a system tend to elevate the characters of nations? Can it teach duty? Can it inspire virtue? Or is it not rather calculated to impair both? To hold out temptations to cowardice and falsehood? Temptations to take shelter under equivocation and deceit, on apprehensions of the slightest injury to private interests—on apprehensions which, by the aid of reason, or by discussion with others, might, under different circumstances, have been despised or overcome? Sir, it has been asked whether it be more degrading or unmanly to vote in secret, under the protection of Ballot, than to vote openly against our consciences, for the want of its protection? No one, I believe, has ever asserted that it was so; but is there no alternative? Is there no other mode for enabling a man to vote according to his own conscience, except the Ballot? Is there no remedy to be found for the abuses of open voting, but in the greater evils of secret suffrage? Can no better method be devised for giving the people security in the exercise of their rights, than by exonerating them from all responsibility for the performance of their duties? Sir, I am not one to underrate the evils and abuses now complained of, with regard to elections; I am not one of those who would palliate injustice, or protect its base perpetrators. No one holds all acts of intimidation and corrupt influence in deeper hatred and abhorrence than I do; and if they cannot be repressed by moral means and example—if they cannot be put down by the finger of public scorn, and the indignation of mankind, let the Legislature interfere—let the Parliament, I say, apply its heaviest penalties, its severest remedies, to subdue the evil.

Sir, though many exaggerations have, no doubt, prevailed on this subject—though the instances of abuse which have come to my ears frequently turned out, on inquiry, to be neither so gross nor so numerous as they had been previously represented, still, however, I am grieved to admit there have been but too many cases of intimidation and undue influence—acts, exercised not only by the rich and powerful, but (strange to relate) even by the middle and poorer classes of society—by Members of Political Unions—by many of the very men who have been loudest in their declamations against such abuses, and in calling on the Legislature for the protection of the Ballot. But in what instances, I would ask, have these practices been successful? What encouragement has been afforded by their results for repetitions of the crime? Sir, I will venture to affirm that not half a dozen cases can be found in which the perpetrators of these enormities have been successful—in which they have reaped anything but public scorn and execration for their base and unprincipled attempts. Sir, I have admitted that I know cases where intimidation and undue influence have been resorted to. In some, the electors, too timid or too dependent to resist, have yielded reluctant submission to the will of their superior. In others, they have resisted, have manfully resisted the haughty mandate, and vindicated to themselves the sacred right of voting according to the dictates of their own consciences. I am acquainted with many instances, both of farmers and tradesmen who have acted in this independent and honourable manner; but I know of none who have been ejected from their farms—of none who have been ruined in their trade by this, their conscientious adherence to principle. Even where tradesmen may have suffered for the moment by the withdrawal of some of their customers, they have been recompensed, I believe, in the end, by the accession of others; and the threat, or attempt to injure, has been productive of anything rather than of eventual loss to the persecuted individual:—

> Yea,—even that which mischief meant most harm,
> Did, in the happy trial, prove most glory.

Sir, in this life—in this state of moral discipline, and warfare—it was never meant that the current of human affairs should always run smoothly; it was never meant that men should be triumphant and virtuous without an effort. That which purifies mankind is trial, and trial comes by what is contrary. This I hold to be no less true in politics than in religion. Were the Ballot to be obtained to-morrow, and were it to be attended with all those results of secrecy and protection which the hon. Gentleman so fondly anticipates, still, Sir, I very much doubt whether those benefits would, in any degree, compensate for their accompanying evils; for that effeminacy and demoralization of mind, which a system of secrecy and distrust could not fail of entailing upon the people. It would go far, I fear, to engender habits of evasion and falsehood; it would go far to impair the spirit, the candour, the energy of the British character, and with them, its best virtues; for I say in the language of Mr. Fox: "That it is not the written law of the Constitution—that it is not the law to be found in books, that constitutes the true principle of freedom in a country; no—it is the energy, the boldness, of a man's mind, which prompts him to speak and act—not in private, but in large and popular assemblies, that constitutes, that creates in a State the spirit of freedom. This is the principle which gives life to liberty, and without which the human character is a stranger to freedom." Sir, in arguing this question, I have considered the Ballot as likely to be effective for all purposes of secrecy. There are many, however, who contend—and not without reason—that such would not be the case; that from our families, from our friends, from our companions—in the unreservedness of domestic intercourse, in the conviviality of the social circle, in the excitement of popular assemblies, it would be impossible for us altogether to conceal our sentiments—that we should be more or less than men, were we never to give vent to our political feelings and opinions. Be this, however, as it may, it is a part of the subject on which I will not dwell. Should such be the case, the measure would then be only an absurdity—a mere waste of labour. My fear, however, is, that it would prove something more than a dead letter; and that, although nugatory for all good, it would be amply effective for every purpose of evil. Underhand and oblique ways would be more sedulously studied; and the sciences of casuistry and evasion, already tolerably understood, would be soon brought to their utmost perfection.

Sir, believing all this—believing that a system of secret suffrage would be prejudicial to the character and best interests of the country—that it would lend encouragement to imposture and corruption—that it would engender habits of insincerity and distrust—that it would level all distinctions of character, reducing the honest and brave to a footing with knaves and cowards—that it would operate as a check on free discussion, and chill and repress that moral energy, that manly candour, and constancy, and independence of mind, which are amongst the noblest properties and best preservatives of representative Government, and which it was the especial object and tendency of the Reform Act to cherish and improve. Sir, believing, in my honour and conscience, that such would be, sooner or later, amongst the inevitable results of the proposed measure, I have considered it as a duty—as a high and sacred duty—to resist it to the utmost of my power. Sir, it is not by mechanical, but by moral, means—it is not by the Ballot-box, but by the schoolmaster—it is not by screening the hand, but by strengthening and elevating the mind—that we can hope to make the elector such as he ought to be—that we can expect to render him enlightened and independent—competent to exercise the rights, and to perform the duties of a free citizen in a free state. As for the oppressor—the corrupter—the man—whosoever he may be—who abusing, shamefully abusing, the privileges of his rank and station—who, basely perverting the wealth and power with which Providence had intrusted him for the good, into the bane and curse of his fellow-creatures—as for the man, I say, whatever his name and station, who corruptly or tyrannically interferes with the rights of electors, and the freedom of elections—be the hisses of popular execration—the scorn of the wise and good—the severest penalties of the Legislature upon his head!

But, in suppressing the abuse, let us consider well about the means. Let us take care that the remedy be not worse than the disease. Let us, at least, beware that we do not substitute a general and permanent evil for one which, however grievous and oppressive, is still, I would fain believe, of a very partial and temporary nature. Sir, I repeat that the Ballot is not necessary. I agree with the noble Lord who spoke last, that there is nothing in the state of the country—nothing in the character of the people—to demand so extreme, so desperate a remedy. Whatever be the amount of abuse complained of, it may all, I am confident, be redressed by milder, by more constitutional means. The people of England require not the Ballot; they want no such defences. They braved the borough faction in the strength of its power; need they now fear it in this its mortal hour of weakness and decay? They defeated it by their own native courage, and by the exercise of their own manly and characteristic virtues, they defeated the combined oligarchy in fair fight and in open day; and would they now resort to the arrows of darkness and the shield of night, to protect themselves from the wrecks of its scattered host? Sir, I will detain the House no longer. I know the popular prejudices, the popular fears, that prevail upon this subject. I know the penalties, the misrepresentations, to which every man is subject who opposes those prejudices and fears. But, Sir, (if I may be permitted to speak of so humble an individual as myself,) I would say, that however dear to this heart must be the approbation of my countrymen, the cause of liberty is still dearer. It is a cause for which I struggled in my youth, and which I will not desert in my maturer years—it is a cause which I have often endeavoured to defend against the attacks of open enemies, and which I will not compromise or betray now that it is assailed by the more dangerous counsels of injudicious friends.

Mr. *Tayleure* said, he thought the Ballot necessary to complete the Reform Bill. The vote was worse than useless to the elector, who was under a control that prevented the free exercise of his right; a right that was given by law, but of which he was deprived by an usurper. If the people were incapable of exercising the right why was it given? If the privilege were taken away by Act of Parliament, or by a private individual, the people were equally enslaved. Who were they that required the protection of the Ballot? The honest, the industrious, but the poor and the humble; and not he that did not need it as a safeguard—the ruined and profligate tradesman, who, having nothing to care for, defied all control. The careful, the industrious, the frugal tradesman—the man, who hoped, by steady attention to business, to support himself and family in respectability, was, on account of his family, checked by the fear of offending his customers, and must either determine to vote against his conscience, or to ruin the prosperity of his family. For such a man the Ballot was required; and who would say that such a man did not deserve its protection? He was at a loss to reconcile the arguments by which this Motion was combated. At one moment its opponents said that the Ballot would be degrading to men, by teaching them to conceal their opinions, while at another they asserted that the Ballot would not enable them to conceal opinions or votes, for that the utterance of one would betray the others. The great principle on which he supported the Ballot was this, that it would put an end to flattery on the one side, and to servility on the other. No man would take the pains of attempting to influence a vote, when he knew that it could be given independently of his control, nor any labour to wring from a voter a promise, the performance of which he knew he could not enforce. The rich man would cease to think that he had a right to the vote of the poor man, and the poor man that it was his duty to give it at the bidding of his wealthier neighbour. He was confident its effect would be to unite landlord and tenant. The opponents of Ballot lauded the English character; but if they were sincere, as they must know the corruption that at present exists at elections, they should consider the Ballot as highly in accordance with the character of the people, as it would prevent their debasement. It was said, that the elector should be answerable to the public for his vote: but all that could be fairly exacted from him was, that he should not vote from any private motive, but for the advantage of that class of which he was a member; or, if capable of taking a more enlarged view, in favour of what he considered the good of the whole nation. The mortification of those who were compelled to vote against their feelings was not the only evil of the present system; the revenge inflicted on those who refused to surrender their opinions was very lamentable. This evil was mostly felt in towns, where tradesmen were dealt with, not for the quality of their goods, but for their vote at the election. He thought a wrong so generally inflicted should be provided for by Act of Parliament. It was said, that no change should be made till the Reformed Parliament should be sufficiently tried; but he thought the last election gave sufficient evidence that a further reform was necessary for the good of the people, and to give them the benefit of that which had already taken place.

Mr. *Francis Baring* protested against the manner in which the hon. member for London had divided the constituency of the country into two classes, the landlords and the tenants, or, in other words, the tyrants and the slaves. Neither could he agree with the hon. Member in designating the new constituency, created by the Reform Bill, as living ciphers, and as mere waxwork voters. He did not know what might be the case in London, but he appealed to such Members of the House as had been elected by large and populous places, and asked them whether they considered themselves the nominees of corrupt influence and oppressive intimidation? He was also surprised that the hon. member for London, who had come to the conclusion that the Ballot was necessary to put down bribery without bringing any individual proofs of the existence of bribery, should have so far forgotten his own theory as to have admitted, that even with the Ballot, bribery would still continue to exercise some power in every election. "Bribery," said the hon. Member, "cannot be put down entirely; it works unseen, and in obscurity, and, do what you will, the foot of justice cannot always follow it in all its doublings." Now, if the hon. Member, with his experience of elections, was obliged to make this admission, did he not think it possible that electioneering agents, with all the ingenuity and acuteness which distinguished them as a class, might devise some means of tampering with electors in clubs and societies, so as to commit bribery and still leave it unscathed by the law? "But, then," said the hon. Member, "the Ballot will prevent the landlord from compelling his tenant to vote in behalf of his nominee, and will enable the tenant to vote according to the dictates of his own conscience." Now, in his humble judgment the Ballot would not even have this effect, for the landlord who was inclined to compel his tenant to vote as he pleased, would, when he became suspicious of the mode in which the tenant would vote, get rid of the possibility of his tenant's voting against him, by insisting that he should not vote at all. The hon. Member had referred to the manner in which the system of the Ballot worked in America and in France, as a recommendation for the introduction of it into this country. Now, from the hon. Member's own statement, it appeared that some of the States, in the United States of America, adopted the open system of voting, though the majority adopted the secret system of the Ballot. If, then, the open system of voting were pregnant with such dangerous consequences to the independence of the electors, we should see all those dangerous consequences developed in those states where the open system of voting formed part of their constitution; and if the secret system of voting were productive of such general benefits as the hon. Member represented, we should see all those benefits exemplified in those states where the secret system was adopted. At any rate, if there was any force in the hon. Member's argument, we should see a wide difference in the manner in which the election of the two classes of states were conducted. Such, he contended, ought to be the result of the hon. Member's theory. Now, he had never heard that there was in practice the slightest difference discernible in the two. Perhaps the House might imagine, from the tone of the hon. Member, that in the United States all parties were united in praise of the Ballot. To show them how wide that supposition was from the truth, he would read them the sentiments which the Governor of the province of New York, where the Ballot prevailed, had expressed not long ago in a public document, which he had addressed to his constituents. The whole subject of the Governor's grievance in that document was the intimidation which had been exercised in favour of the United States, Government candidate, and against himself, who was the provincial or popular candidate. This was his language:—"That many persons holding offices in the public service of the United States' have acted most improperly, by interfering in our elections, is known to every man in the community, who has eyes to see, and who is not steeled by prejudice against the admission of truth." The Governor then went through the different offices, beginning with those in the Navy-yard. After enumerating the holders of different offices, he added, "The documents herewith produced will show, that at the last election officers in the public employ were brought up to vote, not according to their own feelings, but according to the feelings of the different chiefs in their respective departments, and that improper attempts were made upon all of them, in order to influence the result of the contest." He would not tire the House by reading further extracts, but would confine himself to stating that the Governor of New York concluded by stating a series of facts, proving a close concert between the officers of the Customs, the Excise, the Post-office, the Navy-yard, and even of the judicial Bench operating upon the local election. They had, then, the opinion of an able and accomplished man, who was practically acquainted with the system, that in one of the United States, where the Ballot was in full operation, its effects were not such as the hon. Member represented them in his argument. But the hon. Member would, perhaps, tell him that the Ballot did not exist in its utmost purity in America. If that were so, then the inference was, that the Americans had not put the system of Ballot into full execution, or that they had found it so inconsistent with the habits of a free people as to have deemed it politic to abandon it as a remedy for the evils which the hon. Member had described. With regard to the effects of the Ballot in France, the hon. Member had limited the period which he selected for the illustration of its benefits to the last ten years. He had begun with the year 1820, and had thought it prudent to forget that the Ballot existed in France from the first existence of a popular assembly in France in the year 1790. Now if the hon. Member quoted the great improvements in civil liberty which France had reaped from her legislative assemblies elected by the Ballot during the last ten years as proofs of the advantage to be derived from the Ballot, he ought, in fairness, to have shown the other side of the picture, and to have told the House that the National Assembly, the National Convention, Robespierre, Marat, and all the great monsters of the French Revolution, were also elected under the same system. He did not think that there was much force either way in such an argument, but it was not fair to take one period of history to exemplify the blessings of a system, and to overlook another period which exemplified its evil consequences. In fair argument the whole period should be taken, and the advantages and disadvantages of the system during that whole period should be contrasted and balanced with each other. The hon. Gentleman concluded by stating, that whilst on the other side of the House he had always voted against the introduction of the Ballot into our elective system, and now that he was seated on the Ministerial Benches he saw no reason for changing his opinion. He should certainly vote against this Motion.

Dr. *Lushington* said, that no man, however great his eloquence and ability, should induce him to believe that if the system of voting by ballot were made the law of the land, and if, as a consequence, the voting at elections was secret, the effect would not be visible in the diminution of that intimidation, corruption, and bribery, of which every Member in the House complained, and of which all men professed their desire to obtain a remedy. If there were any certainty in the motives of human actions, there was certainty in this, that when a man parted with his money for any object, he parted with it in proportion to his assurance that the object which he sought to purchase would be attained by the outlay. In proportion, therefore, as the House diminished the certainty of bribery being successfully exerted, would it diminish the attempts made to corrupt and influence the constituency of the country. He was surprised at the language which he had heard used that evening in the House. His hon. friend, the member for Portsmouth, had said, "I have listened with the greatest attention to the hon. member for London, and disappointed, indeed, am I that, after such long and elaborate preparation, he should have concluded his speech without bringing us some direct proofs of the existence of the evils which he seeks to remedy." Now, did any man in that House, did his hon. friend himself, venture to deny the existence of those evils? Must he, at that time of day, ask for proofs of the existence of bribery and corruption? Let those who entertained doubts on such a subject look at what had occurred that Session—let them look at the different reports which had been received from the different election committees—let them look at the disgrace by which the borough of Hertford was stained—let them look at the evidence already on their Table; and then let any man state, if he dared, that the House would have listened to any detail of individual cases to establish a crime which was incontrovertible, and which was as notorious as the sun at noon-day. Intimidation! had the House heard nothing of intimidation? Was there any Member who had stood a contested election that was bold enough to say that he had not seen it produce its effects? Had not his noble friend, who introduced the Reform Bill, experienced himself in Devonshire what the hand of the oppressor was on the exercise of that franchise of which the possession, supposing it not to be exercised independently, was not a boon, but an injury—not a blessing, but a curse—a curse on the individual, who must feel his degradation, in case he was compelled to vote in favour of an individual whom in his conscience he believed to be unworthy of the sacred trust confided to every Representative of the people—and a curse upon the country, as it led to the election of persons whom a majority of the electors deemed to be actuated by principles dangerous to the well-being of the state. He had made up his mind upon this question, not from any hearsay evidence, but from his own experience. It had been his fortune to stand two contested elections in the last three years; one was for a populous borough in the country, and the other for the Tower Hamlets, a borough which he believed contained the most numerous constituency in the empire. Now, he could aver, from facts which came within his own knowledge, that intimidation of the most revolting character was exercised upon the electors of the lower orders in both districts,—intimidation which might have overawed the independence of either borough, had it not been resisted by exertions so extraordinary that no man could believe, who had not personally witnessed them. Individual instances of intimidation his hon. friend should have, as he had called for them. He (Dr. Lushington) had had to contend at his last election against the whole weight of the West Indian interest. Now, he would give the House an instance how the West Indian interest had conducted their operations. The principals of a large West Indian house went to a tradesman, with whom they were in the habit of dealing. They said to him, "Will you give us one vote for Captain Marryat?" He replied that he would. The next question was, "Will you give us another against Dr. Lushington?" The tradesman replied, that he was ready to give one vote to please them, because they were his customers, but said that he must give the other vote to please himself. "Then," said they, "make out your account immediately, there is a draft for the balance, but on no account shall you ever have another order from our house." It so happened that the tradesman was in independent circumstances. His spirit was roused by this mixture of insolence and oppression, and within an hour of the occurrence of this transaction, he came and informed him (Dr. Lushington) of the particulars. By the late Reform Bill they had extended the elective franchise, and by so doing, they had rendered the adoption of the Ballot more necessary than ever. They had given the franchise to voters of a lower class than those who previously possessed it, and for the safety and comfort of those voters, the House ought to give them the Ballot as a shield and protection against the foul weight of the oppressor. He implored the House to recollect the principles upon which the Reform Bill was based. Ever since that question, which had been recently brought to so triumphant a conclusion, had been mooted in Parliament, he had advocated it upon this ground—that if they wished to ensure good government, to enforce economy at home, and peace abroad, and to protect by equal justice, all classes of his Majesty's subjects, it was necessary to have the representatives of the people chosen by large bodies of electors, who voluntarily gave them their suffrages to act as their representatives in Parliament. Now, was it not a mockery, after passing such a Bill as that under which this present Parliament was elected, to continue any longer the system of open voting? But they had been told, that this was a public trust, which ought to be publicly exercised. He acknowledged that it was a public trust of the deepest importance; and he therefore advocated the Ballot as that mode of discharging it which would enable the trustee to discharge his duty the most effectually for the benefit of his trust. Experience had satisfied him that a trial of the Ballot was indispensably necessary to the secure and beneficial exercise of the elective franchise.

Sir *George Phillips* declared himself adverse to the system of secret voting. At the same time he felt obliged to admit, that gross interference with the rights of the constituency had been used by those persons who were most adverse to the introduction of the Ballot. He felt obliged to admit, that those landlords who called themselves conservatives, had attempted to control their tenantry as to their votes, in a manner that was inconsistent with the principles of the Reform Bill. Before the new system of election was again changed, we ought to have more experience of its operations. He did not see that the Ballot would prevent bribery; it would be likely to double bribery, for voters might delude both sides. It had been said, that the Ballot had been tried in America; but a friend of his, speaking from observation, had stated, that too much importance was attached to this measure there. He wished to put all parties on their guard, by impressing upon them, that the Ballot, though it might be employed for good purposes, might be easily abused for bad.

Major *Fancourt* said, that if, in the arguments adduced by hon. Gentlemen who had brought this question before the House, or in those urged by hon. Members in support of the proposed change, he could discover any proof, however slight, that such a change would be beneficial to the real interests of the people, then indeed this measure should have his cordial support; but, from the best consideration he had been enabled to give to it, he could discover little or no advantage derivable from it. On the contrary, to him at least it appeared fraught with results fatal to the integrity of the popular character, not less than to the natural and honourable influence of a liberal social intercourse. The assertion thus hazarded he would, with the indulgence of the House, endeavour to prove; feeling at the same time deeply sensible of his inadequacy to give a full and forcible expression, even to his own views, and not less sincerely estimating the great information and various talents of many of those from whom on this question he felt bound to differ. But, in matters of this nature, something of personal reluctance might well be sacrificed, when, as regarded our social usages, a national evil was threatened —an opinion which he was fortunate enough to enjoy in common with a very large proportion of his own constituents, and, he sincerely believed, in common with the great majority of the intelligent and really liberal population of the empire. It was almost needless to remark on the inconsistent impatience with which this question had out of doors been pressed on the public attention, by the very persons who, during the discussions on the Reform Bill, over and over again declared that they were willing to let the question of Ballot rest, so they obtained Reform. "Give us Reform," said they; "let us try a Reformed Parliament, and that failing, we will claim the Ballot." Now, I ask, has this trial been made? Would any hon. Member say that a short portion of the first Session of a Parliament, convened under such peculiar circumstances, could, even were its acts unpopular, be urged as a sufficient reason for demanding the Ballot? But he need not press this point. The hon. Member's notice of motion was among the first of the Session, so that if Ballot were to be a sort of remedial measure for the popular inefficiency of a Reformed Parliament, it was singularly enough proposed before the merits or demerits of that Parliament could possibly have been known. However, any speculation as to the inconsistency of those who had at public meetings and in the public Press agitated the question was useless. The question of Ballot was before the House, to be dealt with on its merits. All, that learning, ability, and strenuous zeal could do for it had been done both in and out of Parliament. Some of the most able and argumentative writers of the day had honoured it with their advocacy; and, it need hardly be observed, that many distinguished Members of that House had been equally ardent in its support. From opinions so enforced he should not venture thus publicly to express his dissent, but upon the sincere conviction that the ultimate tendency of the Ballot was against the true interests of the country considered as to its present constitution. And here he would, before entering more minutely into the merits of the question, observe on the assumption on the part of certain politicians, of an exclusive right to speak of the Representation of the people. According to them, property and due influence were irreconcileable. The accident of birth was with such liberals more decisive than with the haughtier members of the aristocracy. According to them no gentleman could possibly love his country; and the class most interested in the preservation of institutions, which give security to all, were held up to public reprobation as enemies to the freedom and impediments to the prosperity of the Empire. This practice of denouncing the gentry as a body distinct from, and opposed to, the people of England, he could not but regard as the most ominous of the signs of the times which had of late years perplexed the really patriotic mind with the fear of fatal change. He was aware that such doctrines were as yet but partially disseminated, for the people of this country were not actually prone to political delusion, but the fact of a large and influential portion of the Press being devoted to such unjustifiable denunciations rendered it probable that the mass of the British population might eventually be misled to that fatal error of regarding their natural protectors as their political foes. With merciless iteration they were daily and hourly told of the pensions, possessions, and political influence of some few great families whose public views were not of a popular character, but never did they hear of the personal and beneficial influence by which, in their respective spheres, the gentry of England were distinguished beyond the aristocracy of any nation in the world. And this was the influence—the influence of friendly acts and feelings, of neighbourhood and a community of interests between the country gentleman and those who through different gradations, were all more or less socially connected with him—this was the influence which the Ballot would destroy. That the destruction of this influence might be an object of solicitude to the avowed enemies of our present form of Government he could readily conceive; and also that they could have selected no better means for the attainment of their object than the vote by Ballot; but precisely on these grounds he felt bound to resist it, and, he trusted, that his Majesty's Ministers would not consent to so early and important a disturbance of their final measure. At all events he trusted that the House would resist it as an innovation not only uncalled for in itself, but one of the most injurious and revolutionary tendency. He said revolutionary tendency, because out of doors the avowed advocates of a republican Government were at the same time the most urgent in the clamour for Ballot. To him it appeared that both on the one side and the other, in all that he had read on this subject, too much attention was paid to certain men, or points urged with great skill and various advantage, but to the exclusion of the great considerations as to the tendency of secret voting, with reference to the moral character of the people, and to the legitimate influence of property in the several gradations of society. On the first of these points, he contended, that bribery, wholesale irresponsible bribery, must be increased and facilitated by the Ballot; yet were its tendency to throw difficulty in the way of such practices, he should not conceive that a sufficiently countervailing circumstance, upon looking to the systematic duplicity and remorseless violation of good faith, which one of the most able writers in support of the measure has pronounced preferable to the venality now too prevalent. The mischievous nature of the Ballot appeared to him to be this—that while it neither diminished, nor tended to diminish, the old practice of bribery, it, by its very nature, induced the additional degradation of a deeply designing and heartless duplicity, now, certainly, not among the distinguishing characteristics of the English people. But he further contended, that secret voting must, in the cases of boroughs and divisions of counties, fail of its object. In such constituencies concealment was almost impossible. For example, with reference to the great majority of borough towns, would any Gentleman who had had occasion to make himself acquainted with such constituencies dispute the facility and precision with which calculations as to voting might be made? And what, in such cases, would be the effect of the Ballot? Why, to throw the freemen and poorer class of electors into the hands of some venal farmer of votes, who, upon a promise of conditional payment, might secure a majority, and whose pernicious influence would be perpetuated by the secrecy of its working, a secrecy which the law could hardly reach. Thus, personal responsibility, one of the great features of our political and social condition, must be abolished. Was not that point worthy of consideration in a British House of Commons? Surely the elective franchise was a political trust. So at least it was emphatically denominated by the borough-abolitionists in the recent discussions on Reform. Their great argument was, that the elective franchise was a political trust, and not a personal right. Well, if it were a political trust, surely its exercise involved a public responsibility. But what became of this responsibility if they agreed to secret voting? There was no responsibility in secret voting; and why, he would ask, should the voters enjoy an unconstitutional protection, when the Representative, the Minister of the Crown, nay, the Monarch himself, were all subject to the salutary control of public opinion? He could not but think it singularly inconsistent that those who were so urgent for the accurate publication of parliamentary votes, and for the most undisguised method of proceeding in all matters of public interest, should pertinaciously contend for secret voting at elections. In support of this inconsistency they adduced arguments to which it was more painful than difficult to reply. He said painful, because of the subterfuges to which some of the most powerful writers were reduced in support of their favourite theory. One of these arguments he would just notice. "Why," it was asked, "do Gentlemen oppose the vote by Ballot for the people, while they themselves adopt it in their club elections?" This specious question, so proudly urged in political reviews, so loudly cheered at public meetings, might be most easily and fairly answered. Every gentleman belonging to a club must know that the case of a club election was essentially distinct from that of a political election. In the case of a club election there was no contest between gentlemen of different political opinions—

indeed there was no contest whatever. All that the electors had to determine was, whether the particular individual balloted for, were a gentleman with whom they would willingly associate or not? Certain of the members might have good reasons for rejecting a candidate. They did so under the shelter of Ballot, and thereby not only avoided personal altercation, but also saved the rejected candidate from the annoyance of ulterior explanation. Now, could this apply to political elections when a choice was to be made between two candidates, not upon personal grounds, not upon private character, but upon public principles and political efficiency? In the case of the rejection of a club candidate there was always more or less of personal slight. In that of the political candidate there was nothing of the kind. If rejected, he was rejected on public grounds, and his rejection ought to be a public act, marked and decided, and not a covert attack as was proposed by the present measure. By the operation of such a measure he could not believe that electors would enjoy any protection which they did not now possess, if they had sense to form, and courage to maintain, an opinion. He who had not sense enough to form an opinion had no need of Ballot as a protection; he would always be led by some one; and he who had not the manliness to act on his conviction was not justified in applying to Parliament for the protection of Ballot—a mode of voting favourable not only to pusillanimity, but to duplicity, meanness, and venality. Then one word as to the probable effect of Ballot on the legitimate influence of property. In this view he conceived it to be objectionable chiefly as regarded county Representation. But first, considering the principle generally—that was, the influence of landlords with their tenants, employers with their workmen, &c., he contended that such influence was a due influence, and one which ought to be preserved. In large commercial constituencies, for example, where the Ballot would most effectively operate as to secrecy, what was the necessity for concealment at all? Among all classes of such a constituency there existed a community of interests, and the candidate most conversant with those interests, and best qualified for their effective advocacy, was tolerably certain of success. This assertion would be amply borne out by a reference to the results of the late election: and if this were so, who was to be benefitted by the Ballot? One person only,—the popular declaimer, who, by vehement appeals to the passions of the people on some favourite topic, might excite them against the legitimate influence of intelligence and property, employing the stale but inexhaustible manœuvre of decrying all station as tyrannous, and all wealth as wrung from the sufferings of the poor. An audience so excited, might, under the shelter of ballot, vote in a way which, without that protection, they would probably hesitate to do, namely in opposition to the more enlightened and dispassionate of those with whom, by a community of personal and commercial interests, they were naturally associated. But how far this was to be considered an advantage, it is incumbent on the advocates of Ballot to prove. He, for one, thought it would be an evil, and therefore he opposed the measure. He now came to the probable working of the Ballot in the agricultural districts. Here it would, he conceived, be most inefficient as to secrecy, and at the same time most objectionable as to its general results. As far as his own experience of county elections went, he ventured to assert, that secrecy under ballot-voting, would be scarcely possible; and that such secrecy, if attainable, or indeed any mode of voting tending to alter the present relation between landlord and tenant, would be a mischievous innovation. Did hon. Gentlemen who advocated ballot as a protection for the farmer, differing in opinion from his landlord, propose to do away with personal canvass? He should imagine not, It was impossible to abolish this long-established usage. Well, personal canvass continuing, how, if the tenant were really in awe of his landlord, was the Ballot to benefit him, except in the case where, by promising one way, and voting another, he established his claim to political integrity?—unless in that case concealment was next to impossible, and he again contended, that were it possible, it would be most undesirable. Gentlemen talked of tenants being led to the hustings, and forced to vote under the fear of ejectment; but reprobating such undue influence as much as any man, and furthermore satisfied of its infrequency, he would ask those Gentlemen if they had ever witnessed a willing and confiding tenantry accompanying their landlord to the hustings, relying on the political honesty of one whose personal honour they had abundant opportunities of estimating? He had had the pleasure of witnessing this, and he could sincerely assert that a mutual understanding more honourable to both parties, it was impossible to conceive. And what was to be substituted for this? Why, a mode of voting which, if it ensured secrecy, must, at the same time, ensure distrust and duplicity, and which, if it could not—as in the case of counties he contended it could not—ensure that secrecy, would be a perpetual lure to deception, and at the same time wholly inadequate for its declared objects. This mischievous innovation was uncalled for—it was by its very nature foreign to our habits, and at direct variance with our established usages. Were the country now forming, for the first time, a political constitution, and establishing popular representation as an element of that constitution, they might resolve on Ballot, and prohibit personal canvass, should such a course appear advisable. In that case, the instance of France and America might be fairly adduced; but guarding, as he trusted we ever should, with fostering care, a constitution of tried wisdom and enduring power, we were not justified in looking either to France or America, for models as regarded our electoral law. He had no wish to allude to the present state of either of those nations, but thus much he might be permitted to observe, that, until the usages adopted by them should have succeeded, not alone in forming and encouraging a popular character of more general and pervading patriotism, but also in electing a representative body, distinguished by greater and more nationally useful qualities than had been hitherto evinced by the people and Parliament of England, we ought to employ ourselves rather in preserving our own customs, than in imitating theirs. That these opinions, at a period of political excitement like the present, should be popular, he could not expect. But principles were not to be sacrificed to popularity. The advantages enjoyed by us under our free constitution, were originated and secured by no selfish or merely temporary views. No; those advantages had resulted from a generous but no less prudent spirit of legislation, looking, it was true, to the interests of each particular period of our progression, but never losing sight of the ultimate destinies of this constitutional monarchy, as far as they were subject to human wisdom or control. Animated by this spirit, devotedly attached to this form of Government, because he believed it to be the only one adapted to the feelings, habits, and true interests of the people of England, he felt bound to resist this and all other measures which, to his judgment, appeared levelled at what he might be allowed to call the interwoven interests of the people the aristocracy, and the Crown. He, for one, would never consent to any disseverance of those interests; and believing the Ballot to have a decided tendency to such disseverance, he should give his vote against this measure.

Lord *Althorp* said, that the position in which he stood, rendered it necessary that he should address the House on this question, in order to explain the grounds of the vote he should give. Since he had had the honour of a seat in that House, there had been one division on this question, on the motion of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. O'Connell), in which he had voted for the adoption of the ballot, and he had since expressed himself in favour of that mode of taking votes; but he had never stated or urged it as a *sine quâ non* of good government. He had stated that he was inclined to prefer it, but he did not fail to state, at the same time, that he saw many objections to it, though he still thought the advantages preponderated. When the question of the Reform of Parliament was before the House, though there were some who wished that that measure should have gone a great deal further, there was a readiness, for the sake of the great measure of Reform, to abandon the question of the Ballot: that was, in fact, the universal feeling of the country. If this was the case—if, in the first place, they, uniting with the majority of Reformers (for those who espoused the Ballot were not the majority of the Reformers)—if uniting with them they obtained the measure of Reform, it could not be right and proper, or just and fair, to turn round and say, "having obtained this advantage, we will make use of it, in order to obtain the Ballot." But there was one ground on which he should not be justified at present, and in the circumstances of the country, in giving his vote in favour of the motion. He never should have supported the Ballot in a reformed Parliament, or any other, unless he saw great practical inconveniences resulting from not having it. He did not deny that great practical evils were produced, but those evils must exist to a great extent, and become a real public evil, before he could adopt so great a change in the Constitution, in order to remedy them. He did not think that, under the present system of reform such evils existed to any extent, and therefore not believing them to exist to such an extent as to influence the public interests, he certainly did not think we ought to adopt such a change as this. It had been stated by the hon. member who brought forward this Motion, that when his noble friend introduced the Reform Bill, he said, that this was a question not immediately connected with that measure. But he (Lord Althorp) appealed to every Gentleman who was in the last Parliament, and who knew the whole proceedings whilst the question of Reform was going on, whether the promoters of that measure did not contend, that, as far as the representation of the people was concerned, it was to be considered and was proposed as a final measure. He (Lord Althorp) had stated that frequently to the House. It might be said, undoubtedly, that the vote he should give to-night would be inconsistent with that which he had given on the motion of the hon. and learned Gentleman; but if he were now to vote with the hon. member for the city of London, he should be acting more inconsistently with every thing he had stated during the whole progress of the measure of Reform. If those Gentlemen who supported that measure thought it was wholly inefficient and useless, unless it was accompanied by the Ballot, they would have acted more fairly if they had come forward last Session, and stated that they could not be satisfied with Reform, unless it was accompanied with the Ballot. There might be one or two Gentlemen who were of that opinion; the late member for Preston was one, who always advocated the Ballot; the hon. member who cheered (Mr. Warburton) was another; but the great body of supporters of the Reform Bill did not claim credit for the same declaration; and would it not be inconsistent in this, the first Session of the Reformed Parliament, before any great practical evils had been laid before the House, which interfered with the public interests, immediately to support a motion for the Ballot? With regard to the speeches on both sides to-night, he thought some of those who had spoken for the Ballot had exaggerated the evils it was proposed to cure; but he thought those who had spoken against it had been guilty of more exaggeration. He did not think that the Ballot would destroy the legitimate influence of property, or that any measure would do so. But still he did not think it a grand panacea to prevent bribery and corruption, though it would render them more difficult. He avowed, that if there were no other reasons, on the whole he should prefer this mode of taking votes, but he did not think the evils were such as to justify the change. He was conscious that he was liable to attack for the vote he should give, but if he gave his vote any other way, he should be liable to a still more merited attack.

Mr. *Cobbett* rose and said: Sir, before I proceed to the merits of the question, the House will be so good as to suffer me to make a remark on what has fallen from the hon. member for Portsmouth, relative to the practice of the Ballot in America. The hon. Gentleman has told us, that in some of the states there is Ballot, and in some of them no Ballot; so that, as far as America goes, here is no authority at all in its favour. For the want of full information upon the subject, the hon. Gentleman omitted to tell the House that there is no Ballot in those States where slavery exists in the greatest degree; and that there is Ballot in all the States where slavery does not exist. Then the hon. Member has read to us an extract from an address of the Governor of New York to the Houses of Assembly of that State, complaining of the interference of the government officers in the late election, complaining of the conduct of the officers of the naval yard, of the custom-house, and even of the judiciary. It must have appeared somewhat strange to the House that there should have been a Governor complaining of the officers of his own government, and persons of his own appointment. But, when the House is told, that the general government of the United States have a naval yard, a custom-house, and a judiciary in the State of New York, as well as in each of the other states, the seeming absurdity disappears; and the fact is this, the governor of the State of New York, who had been just elected, was of politics different from the President of the United States; and he very justly complained of the interference of the officers of the United States to prevent his election; and he was suggesting to the legislature the propriety of adopting some regulation to prevent such interference in future; and, upon this peculiar transaction, with regard to which the Ballot is not once mentioned by the governor of the State of New York, the hon. member for Portsmouth puts the construction, that the great and flourishing state of New York had cast aside the Ballot. So much for the argument imported from America, whence I could, if I would, import an argument, and a set of facts much more available to the use of the hon. Gentleman than those which he has chosen to employ; but, even these, if duly considered, would amount to no argument at all against the use of the Ballot in England. Now, Sir, with regard to the Ballot in England, it never has been a very great favourite of mine; it involves no principle of political rights: it is merely a regulation for the prevention of unjust influence, and I am sorry that it has been found to be absolutely necessary to that prevention. But, after having seen the proceedings at the late election, and after hearing the speech of the hon. and learned member for the Tower Hamlets (to have drawn forth which would have been worth much more than this whole discussion), it is impossible for any man to doubt of the justice of adopting this regulation. I am sorry not to see one of the hon. members for West Surrey in his place; and sorry, too, lest he should be kept away by a cause affecting his health. That hon. Member told us in the town hall at Guildford, on the day of the declaration of the result of the election, that many persons who had promised him their votes, had come to him before the day of election, and some of them with tears in their eyes, to beseech him to release them from their promises; for that they had been threatened with ruin to their families if they voted for him, and did not vote for his opponent. He, with his characteristic goodness and benevolence, told them at once, "Take care of your families and never mind my election: the good of electing me is very doubtful, while the evil resulting to you is certain; therefore never think about injuring me, but consult the good of your families." The tax-gatherers and hired overseers canvassed for votes, with their taxing-bills and rate-bills in their hand; and, at the bottom of those bills was printed, on papers, which I myself saw, "Vote for Sumner." Now, Sir, ought this to be? Is it not a shame to call men freemen and free electors while they are left exposed to an imperious influence like this? I am sure that hon. members who sit here for counties, sit here to act an honest and independent part. I am to presume that none of them were conscious of improper means being made use of to procure their election; but I have no hesitation to express my firm belief, that a majority of them sit here in virtue of the exertions of stewards, attornies, tax-gatherers, and hired overseers. An hon. Gentleman, and a noble Lord, who have spoken from this bench, have represented us, who support this proposition, as being actuated by a restlessness to get on to further changes. They have told the House, that, while the Reform Bill was passing, we said that we would give the Bill a fair trial; that we would ask for nothing more until it had a full and fair trial. This is not a fair statement of the language of the reformers upon that occasion. We always excepted the two points, the ballot and triennial Parliaments, which were points expressly reserved by the noble Lord who brought in the Bill, and, we expected that these two points would have been taken up by the last Parliament that has passed; that this was the understanding of the reformers is clear; because the hon. member for London, on the very first day of the Session, gave notice of this Motion, while another hon. member for London gave notice of a Motion for triennial Parliaments. It was relative to the extent of the suffrage that we pledged ourselves to give the Bill a fair trial; and not at all with regard to these two points; and, therefore, it is unjust to accuse us of restlessness and of a desire for further and further change. There was something said, but not very good-naturedly nor very prudently, by the noble Lord the member for Shropshire, and by the hon. Gentleman who a little while ago was sitting on my right (Major Fancourt I believe). The noble Lord, while he called us the party of the "Movement." rather broadly hinted, that we aimed at the destruction of the rights of property; no man is more ready to allow than I am, that property has its rights; but at the same time the noble Lord will have the goodness to allow, that property has also its duties; and if he will have the goodness to attend here to morrow-night, he will, I am sure, assist me in urging that property to perform its duties. The law commands every one in a whole vicinage, to come forth, and if need be, even to risk his life, in defence of a Lord's estate. I have no objection to that; I say that that is right; but if property has thus the command of men's bodies, I deny its right to extend to their souls; I deny its right to coerce men's votes and consciences. The hon. Member who spoke from my right, was more indiscreet still; he went so far as to say, that he discovered amongst the bad signs of the times, a disposition in some persons (and I am afraid that he looked rather hard at me when he said it) to stir up the other classes of the community against the nobility and gentry of the kingdom; he said that these were the natural protectors of the humbler classes, and that the persons, to whom he rather more than alluded, were labouring to set the common people against these their natural and kind protectors. Sir, the nobility and gentry are naturally the protectors of those in inferior life, particularly the poor; they ought to be their kind protectors; nothing more desirable, than to see every creature in a bunch of parishes deeming that there is always safety under the wing of the Lord; nothing more lamentable, than to see the chain broken. But, Sir, will the people deem those, their kind protectors, who transport them to Botany Bay for seven years, for killing or being in pursuit of a hare; and that too by novel laws made by themselves? Will they deem those their kind protectors who hang them for resisting their gamekeepers? And am I to be accused of a desire to set the poor against the rich, because I complain, and justly complain, of these cruel oppressions of the poor? It has never been an object of mine to set the poor against the rich. I beg the House to observe that I claim no merit in having abstained from doing it; for, probably, it was my duty to have done it. Sir, I give my hearty assent to the Motion: and, with regard to the noble Lord and the hon. Gentleman to whom I have alluded, my advice to them would be to leave the rights of property very much to take care of themselves; and by no means to continue their hostility to the rights of the people; for, they may be well assured, that, though they may triumph for a while, in the end they are sure to fall.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, that he would only detain the House for a few minutes. He thought that hon. Members who had spoken against the adoption of Vote by Ballot, though they said they were averse to it, had brought forward no sound argument against its adoption. The question at issue was really this. Was the vote to belong to the voter, or to any body else? Was it his own property, or the property of those who could exercise an influence over him? Those who thought that the vote ought to belong to the voter, should support Vote by Ballot; those who thought that it was not his property, and that he ought not to have the free exercise of it, should oppose Vote by Ballot. Without Vote by Ballot and without secresy, it was impossible that a vote could be a voter's own. There was bribery and interference to influence him on all hands. There was hope of gain on the one hand, and fear of loss on the other; and if there was not actual bribery, there was at least the expectation of a bribe to induce a man to vote contrary to his conscience. There were two views in which the question should be considered. Ought a man's vote to be his own? And ought he to be allowed to sell it? It would be at once conceded that a voter should not be allowed to sell his vote, and the Ballot was the only security against such sale; for, if there were Vote by Ballot and secrecy (without which Vote by Ballot was nothing) he was not likely to get a purchaser. No man would give money for a vote, when he had no means of ascertaining whether it were given him or not. A great deal had been said in the course of the debate by those who opposed the question, of the destruction of the influence of property which the Ballot would cause. Such would not be the effect. The influence of property in the hands of a man who knew how to use it well, would for ever remain, and would have its weight over the minds and consciences of those dependent upon him. But at present it was not that kind of influence which property bore. No. It was the harsh unforgiving landlord who had influence now over his trembling and degraded tenantry. It had been said, that it was impossible to maintain secrecy of Ballot, and that had been brought forward as an argument against the adoption of Vote by Ballot. But if it were impossible, he would beg to ask in what worse situation would they be with the Ballot, than without it? But with proper regulations secrecy might be easily preserved. It had then been said, that the Ballot would engender a system of hypocrisy, which might be dangerous in its moral effects. But could there be a worse or more dangerous species of hypocrisy than that which induced a man to give his vote contrary to his opinion. Vote by Ballot would put an end to the system of canvassing for situations of public trust, which ought to be conferred not for favour, but on account of the merit of the person chosen. It would be impossible long to deny the people the Ballot and it was impolitic to refuse it at present.

The Parliament had very properly extended the suffrage, and, by that extension, many were admitted to the exercise of the franchise whose necessities could not withstand a bribe, and by refusing Vote by Ballot and secrecy of voting, they were holding out a bonus to bribery and perjury. On these grounds he would cordially support the Motion of the hon. member for the City of London.

Sir *Robert Peel* said, that though the hon. and learned member for Dublin had not made a long speech, yet, as it was well known that he had paid much attention to the subject, his powerful mind would have suggested stronger arguments in favour of the question before them, if stronger were to be urged. He (Sir Robert Peel) would briefly review the reasoning of the hon. and learned Gentleman in favour of the Vote by Ballot, confident that the learned Gentleman had omitted nothing which could really be relied on as an argument in its behalf. One of the effects which the learned Member expected from the Ballot was, that it would put an end to canvassing. Did the learned Gentleman consider that as an improvement? Did he think it an improvement, that, after a man had been toiling for years in the service of his constituents, they should receive him with a dead langour and apathy, or that he should return among them with the same feeling? Did he consider it an improvement, that a Member should not have an opportunity of explaining his conduct to his constituents, or of asking them for a renewal of their confidence? For his own part, far from thinking that an improvement, he should consider it to be destructive of one of the strongest links between the represented and their Representatives—one of the best securities for an honest discharge of their respective trusts. It would debar the constituents from a personal acquaintance with their representatives, and it would deprive the representative of the opportunity of mixing with the humbler classes of his constituents, of ascertaining their wants and wishes, and asking their support upon public grounds. If a man of wealth, station, and character, were thus relieved from the necessity of canvassing; in other words, of all personal and individual communication with his constituents —if he was only to appear before them on a stated day, amid all the confusion of a public ceremony, he for one should consider this boasted effect of the Ballot as any thing but a recommendation. The hon. and learned Member had admitted, that the Ballot was nothing without secrecy. Now, he doubted whether it was possible to prevent the public functionaries employed in the elections from knowing how a man voted, and thus obtaining a great degree of influence over many men who would dread that the manner in which they voted should be known. These functionaries would, in fact, become intolerable petty tyrants. In order that secrecy should be maintained, the machinery must be so complete, that the functionaries should remain as ignorant of the nature of a man's vote as any other person. All would allow, that if vote by Ballot were introduced, secrecy was indispensable to any chance of its successful operation. But did the hon. and learned Member think that the voters themselves would permanently conceal their votes? Could they, in the course of gossip with their neighbours, conceal them. Was it possible that a man could conceal it from his wife? Where then was the secrecy? But suppose the secret inviolably kept—that never, in any moment of conviviality, or friendship—of confidential intercourse with a friend or relative, did the voter at a contested election divulge the vote he gave; what an abominable system must that be, under which persons could not discuss with their nearest connexions, how they had fulfilled, or meant to fulfil, a public trust! Could it be expected that men, in their private societies, in their families, in their clubs, at the market, were not to mention that which was probably uppermost in the minds of all. If strict silence were to be observed, vote by Ballot would do more than put an end to public canvass; it would stop public discussion. The hon. and learned Member said, that under the present system, landlords could be tyrants, but did the system which he had advocated not lay the tenantry open to a greater degree of tyranny? Would not the landlords, supposing their power to remain the same, and secrecy to be impracticable, wreak a double vengeance upon those who both disobeyed and deceived them? The hon. and learned Gentleman said, that the Ballot would prevent bribery; but if the disposition to bribe and to be bribed existed, it would have ingenuity enough to defeat their paper regulations against it. The learned Gentleman said, even if you failed in preventing bribery, you would have done no harm—the law would be inoperative—but no mischief would have been done.

But he must contend, that every inoperative law was in itself mischievous. No clubs would be formed, and a more systematic and more extensive system of bribery would be carried on. It threw discredit upon the law to legislate only to fail. If vote by Ballot was only a delusive security against bribery, it was worse than no security at all, for it would prevent other and more effectual precautions. The hon. and learned Member had spoken of the delight of seeing a landlord with his tenantry encompassing him, and going to give their votes in his favour, from a real and conscientious preference, founded on gratitude and respect. If the sight were so delightful, why deprive them of it. He objected to the Ballot, because it would make that House more democratic than it was already, and he thought it democratic enough. He said so openly. He did not wish to conceal that he thought the House of Commons as democratic as was consistent with the principles of the Constitution, and with the maintenance of the just authority and undoubted privileges of the other branches of the Legislature. It had been said, that the Ballot would destroy the influence of property. He would confidently assert, that if the influence of property in elections were destroyed, the security of all property and the stability of all Government, would be destroyed with it. It was surely absurd to say, that a man with ten thousand pounds a year should not have more influence over the Legislature of the country, than a man of ten pounds a year. Yet each was only entitled to a single vote. How could this injustice, this glaring inequality, be practically redressed excepting by the exercise of influence. How could the Government end but in a democracy, if the influence were merely according to numbers? An additional reason for opposing the Motion of the hon. Member was, that after the change made in the electoral system last year, another not less extensive change in the system was most unwise. What! Was there never to be any fixedness in the electoral system? Were they to give no opportunity of judging the effect of the change already made? Until there was strong proof of some practical defect in the system as it at present stood, he should object to a change. By a continual series of experiments on the Institutions of Government, they were depriving themselves of one of the main stays of Government, one of the chief sources of legitimate power—respect for, and attachment, to that which is established, and upon that ground alone he would oppose the Motion. He thought Universal Suffrage more plausible than Vote by Ballot. But if they were to admit Vote by Ballot, it would only be the prelude to further demands; and there was nothing to hinder any Member to come forward the following day to ask them to adopt Universal Suffrage, or any other plan which might be popular. There was no system which had not plausible arguments in favour of its adoption, and certainly the theoretical arguments in favour of Universal Suffrage were at least as strong as those in favour of the Ballot. There were arguments in favour of extending the franchise to women, to which it was no easy matter to find any logical answer. Other and more important duties were intrusted to women; women were allowed to hold property, to vote on many occasions in right of that property—nay, a woman might inherit the Throne, and perform all the functions of the first office of the State; why should they not vote for a Member of Parliament? He objected to the Motion on another ground—namely, that many had been induced to yield their consent to the change effected in the electoral system of the country last year, under a clear understanding that it was to have a fair trial. He would take leave to tell hon. Members, that they would do more good to the country, and be more useful Representatives for their constituents, if they devoted some of the time consumed in discussions on the form of Government under which they were to live, in reading the report of the Poor-law Commissioners, in considering the facts, and in applying themselves to remedy some of the practical and growing evils which it brought to light. On these grounds, and believing that it was necessary for the welfare of the country, that the state of excitement and desire for change in which the people were, should be allayed, he would vote against the Motion of the hon. member for London. So far from thinking that the Ballot would work well, he was of opinion that—though, in quiet times, it might do no harm—yet, in times of excitement, when the public mind was agitated and inflamed, if a Parliament were elected, it would be any thing but a fair representation of the real and sober feelings of the country, and might do irretrievable injury. He concluded by expresssing a hope, that the House would do nothing to change the constituency as established by the Reform Act, till they had had a fair trial of its efficiency.

Mr. *Grantley Berkeley* said: I am well aware, Sir, of the great disadvantages I must labour under, in following the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down; but, at the same time, I feel it necessary to make a few observations in support of the vote I am about to give. I would, therefore, beseech the House to dismiss from their ears the eloquence they have just heard—loud as a trumpet with a silver sound—and turn their attention to the simple and unvarnished facts I shall offer to their notice. Sir, in the division of the county which I have the honour to represent, and during the last election, in one instance, six honest and industrious men, hatters by trade, at Oldland, comprising in their families no less than forty-five individuals, were discharged from their work, and driven to seek the charity of the public, for giving their votes according to their conscience, and as they conceived as best served the interests of their country. The truth of the statement of these men was at first questioned, and finally, accompanied by a solicitor, they went before no less than six different Magistrates to be sworn, who all refused to take their oath on various and frivolous pretexts. Now, Sir, I would ask the House—I would appeal to the country—what purity of election can exist if such intimidation is to continue? Are we not bound, then, to pass some measure for the protection of the labouring man in the free exercise of his franchise? I confess that for a length of time my opinions ranged against the Vote by Ballot, but the necessity of it has been, as it were, forced upon me by the acts of that very party who have ever been loudest in their cry against it. I repeat, that the purity of election does not, and cannot, exist under these circumstances, and without trespassing at this late hour further upon the House, I must say that the measure now before it has my warmest support.

Mr. *Grote* briefly replied, and the House divided—Ayes 106; Noes 211: Majority 105.

List of the AYES.

ENGLAND.
Adams, E. H.
Aglionby, H. A.
Astley, Sir J.
Attwood, Thomas
Barnard, Edward
Barnett, Charles J.
Bayntun, Capt. S. A.
Beauclerk, Major
Berkeley, hn. G. C. F.
Berkeley, hon. C.
Biddulph, Robert
Bish, Thomas
Blandford, Marq. of
Brotherton, Joseph
Buckingham, J. S.
Buller, Charles
Bulwer, E. L.
Chichester, J. P. B.
Clay, William
Cobbett, William
Divett, Edward
Dundas, hon. J. C.
Dykes, F. L.
Ellis, Wynn
Evans, William
Ewart, William
Faithfull, George
Fellowes, H. A. W.
Fellowes, hon. N.
Fenton, John
Ferguson, Sir R.
Fielden, John
Fitzroy, Lord James
Fryer, Richard
Gaskell, D.
Guest, J. J.
Gully, John
Hall, Benjamin
Hardy, John
Hawkins, John H.
Hill, Matthew D.
Hodges, Thomas L.
Hornby, E. G.
Hume, Joseph
Humphery, John
Hutt, William
Ingilby, Sir W. A.
Kemp, Thomas R.
Key, Sir John
King, Edw. Bolton
Lambton, H.
Lamont, Capt. N.
Lister, Cunliffe
Lloyd, John H.
Lushington, Dr. S.
Marshall, John
Molesworth, Sir W.
Moreton, hon. H. G.
Palmer, General
Parrott, Jasper
Pease, Joseph
Penlease, —
Phillips, Mark
Potter, Richard
Ricardo, David
Rider, T.
Rippon, Cuthbert
Romilly, John
Romilly, Edward
Scholefield, Josh.
Simeon, Sir R. G.
Stanley, hon. H. T.
Staveley, J. K.
Strickland, George
Strutt, Edw.
Tancred, H. W.
Tayleure, William
Tennyson, rt. hon. C.
Thicknesse, Ralph
Tooke, William
Torrens, Col. R.
Trelawney, W. L.
Turner, Wm
Tynte, C. J. K.
Thompson, Ald.
Wigney, Isaac N.
Wood, Ald. Matthew
Walker, R.
SCOTLAND.
Gillon, W. D.
Maxwell, Sir Jn.
Parnell, Sir H.
IRELAND.
Bellew, R. M.
Chapman, M. L.
Evans, G.
Finn, W. F.
Fitzgerald, T.
Fitzsimon, C.
Fitzsimon, N.
Grattan, H.
Lalor, Patrick
Maclaughlin, L.
O'Connell, D.
O'Connell, C.
O'Connell, Morgan
O'Dwyer, A. C.
Roche, W.
Roe, James
Ruthven, E. S.
Ruthven, E,
Vigors, N. A.
TELLER.
Grote, George
Warburton, Henry

List of the NOES.

ENGLAND.
Althorp, Lord
Apsley, Lord
Ashley, Lord
Astley, Sir J. D.
Bankes, W. J.
Baring, Francis T.
Baring, Francis
Baring, Henry B.
Bell, Matthew
Benett, J.
Bentinck, Lord G.
Bethell, Rich.
Bewes, T.
Blackstone, W. S.
Briggs, Rawdon
Brocklehurst, I.
Bruce, Lord E.
Bulkeley, Sir R. W.
Buller, James W.
Bulteel, J. C.
Burdett, Sir F.
Burrell, Sir C.
Byng, George
Calvert, N.
Carter, J. B.
Cavendish, Lord
Cavendish, hn. Col. H.
Cayley, Sir G.
Cayley, E. S.

Chaplin, Colonel T.
Clive, E. B.
Clive, hon. R. H.
Collier, J.
Crawley, Samuel
Curteis, Capt. E. B.
Dare, R. W. H.
Darlington, Earl of
Dick, Q.
Dillwynn, L. W.
Dugdale, W. S.
Dundas, Hon. Sir R.
Ebrington, Visct.
Egerton, W. T.
Fancourt, Major
Fenton, Capt. L.
Folkes, Sir W.
Fordwich, Visct.
Forester, Hon. G. C.
Forster, C. S.
Fox, S. L.
Gaskell, J. M.
Gladstone, W. E.
Gordon, Robt.
Gore, Montague
Goring, H. D.
Graham, Sir J. R.
Grant, Right Hon. R.
Greville, Sir C.
Grey, Hon. Col.
Grimston, Visct.
Grosvenor, Rt. Hon. Lord R.
Guise, Sir Berkeley W.
Hughes, Hughes
Halford, H.
Handley, H.
Harcourt, Geo. V.
Harland, Chas.
Hawes, Benjamin
Heathcote, J. J.
Heathcote, G. J.
Henniker, Lord
Herbert, Hon S.
Hobhouse, Sir J. C.
Hodgson, John
Horne, Sir W.
Howard, Philip H.
Howick, Visct.
Halcomb, John
Hope, H. F.
Hyett, W. H.
Ingham, R.
Irton, —
Jermyn, Earl
Jervis, John
Johnstone, Sir J. V.
Johnstone, Sir F. G.
Jolliffe, Col. H.
Kerrison, Sir E.
Kerry, Earl of
Labouchere, Henry
Langston, J. H.
Lee, John Lee H.
Lemon, Sir C.
Lennard, T. B.
Lennard, Sir T. B.
Lennox, Lord W.
Lennox, Lord G.
Lennox, Lord A.
Lincoln, Earl of
Lopes, Sir R.
Lygon, Hn. Col. H. B.
Lumley, Visct.
Lyall, George
Maberley, Col.
Madocks, J.
Mangles, J.
Martin, J.
Mildmay, P. St. J.
Miller, W. H.
Milton, Lord
Molyneux, Lord
Moreton, hon. A. H.
Morpeth, Viscount
Nanney, Ellis O. G.
Nicholl, J.
Norreys, Lord
North, Frederick
Paget, Frederick
Palmer, C. F.
Parker, J.
Parker, Sir H.
Patten, J. W.
Peel, Rt. Hon. Sir R.
Pelham, Hn. C. A.
Pendarves, E. W.
Peter, W.
Phillips, Sir R.
Philips, Sir G.
Pigot, R.
Pinney, W.
Plumptre, J. P.
Ponsonby, Hn. W. F. S.
Price, Richard
Pryme, G.
Ramsbottom, John
Rickford, Wm.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Ramsden, J. C.
Rolfe, R. M.
Ross, Charles
Rotch, Benj.
Rumbold, C. E.
Russell, Rt. Hn. Ld. J.
Russell, C.
Sandon, Viscount
Sanford, E. A.
Sebright, Sir J.
Shawe, R. N.
Skipwith, Sir G.
Slaney, R. A.
Smith, John A.
Smith, R. V.
Somerset, Lord G.
Spankie, Mr. Serjeant
Spry, S. T.
Stanley, Edward
Stanley, E. J.
Staunton, Sir G. T.
Stewart, John
Stewart, P. M.
Talbot, C. R. M.
Talbot, W. H. F.
Throckmorton, R. G.
Todd, R.
Tower, C. T.
Townsend, Lord Chas.
Trevor, hon. H.
Verney, Sir H.
Vernon, hon. G. J.
Vyvyan, Sir R.
Wilbraham, George
Williams, Robert
Williams, T. P.
Williams, W. A.
Willoughby, Sir H.
Wood, Charles
Walsh, Sir J. B.
Walter, J.
Waterpark, Lord
Welby, Glynne E.
Whitmore, W. W.
Wrottesley, Sir J.
Wynn, Rt. Hn. C. W.
Yorke, Capt. C. P.
Young, George T.

SCOTLAND.

Agnew, Sir Andrew
Bannerman, Alex.
Dalmeny, Lord
Dalrymple, Sir J. H.
Dunlop, Capt. J.
Elliot, Hon. Capt. G.
Ewing, James
Ferguson, Robert
Hay, Col. A. Leith
Jeffery, rt. hn. Francis
Johnston, A.
Loch, James
Mackenzie, J. A. S.
Macleod, R.
Murray, J. A.
Ormelie, Earl of
Oswald, J.
Ross, H.
Stewart, Sir M. Shaw
Traill, G.
Wemyss, Capt. J.

IRELAND.

Acheson, Visc.
Christmas, J. N.
Cole, Lord
Cole, Hon. A.
Conolly, Col. E. M.
Hayes, Sir E.
Jones, Capt. T.
Lamb, Hon. G.
Macnamara, Major W.
Macnamara, F.
Martin, J.
Martin, J.
Stawell, Col.
Young, John

Paired off.

FOR.	AGAINST.
Bainbridge, E. T.	Arbuthnot, Gen.
Barron, W.	Brougham, W.
Brigstock, W. P.	Byng, Sir John
Bulwer, H. L.	Dundas, Capt.
Dawson, E.	Ferguson, George
Davies, Col.	Fox, Colonel
Handley, Benj.	Grey, Sir George
Jephson, D. O.	Hardinge, Sir H.
Lambert, Henry	Hanmer, Sir John
Langdale, Hon. C.	Heneage, G. F.
Langton, Col. G.	Hill, Lord M.
Lynch, A. H.	Houldsworth, T.
Methuen, P.	Johnstone, J. J. H.
Morrison, James	Knatchbull, Sir E.
O'Connell, J.	Marjoribanks, S.
O'Connell, Maurice	Mandeville, Visc.
Ord, William	Ossulston, Lord
Phillpotts, John	Palmer, Robert
Roebuck, J. A.	Price, Sir R.
Seale, Colonel	Rice, Rt. Hon. T. S.
Sharpe, General	Tynte, C.
Sinclair, George	Verner, Colonel
Talbot, John H.	Warre, J. A.
Tennant, James E.	Weyland, Major
Vincent, Sir F.	Windham, W. H.
Walker, C.	

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HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, April 26, 1833.

MINUTES.] Petitions presented. By the Earl of RODEN, from Latheran and Comrie, against the present System of Church Patronage in Scotland.—By the Earl of ALBEmarle, from Launditch, against the Taxes on Malt and Hops.—By the Marquess of Lansdowne, from Oldham, and other Places, for Abolishing the Civil Disabilities of the Dissenters; and from Killiney, against Tithes and Church Cess, or any other mode of contributing to the Established Church.—By Lord Western, from Bedworth, for a Revision of the Poor Laws.—By the Bishops of London, and Lichfield, from several Places,—against the Sale of Beer Act.—By the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Dukes of Newcastle, Richmond, and Cleveland, by the Marquesses of Downshire, and Lansdowne, by Earl Delawarr, by Lords Dacre, Western, and Suffield, and by the Bishop of Lincoln, from a great Number of Places, against Slavery.—By the Bishop of Winchester, from the Clergy of the County of Surrey, against the proposed Measure of Irish Church Reform.—By the Marquess of Downshire, the Earl of Roden, and the Bishops of London, Lichfield, Bangor, and Lincoln,—for the Better Observance of the Sabbath.

Stafford Indemnity.] The Order of the Day for resuming the Debate on the Stafford Indemnity Bill was read.

The *Lord Chancellor* moved, that a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the allegations contained in the Preamble of the Bill. It had been suggested by his noble and learned friend (Lord Wynford) that a Secret Committee should be appointed; but he understood that such a course was quite unprecedented. He, therefore, moved for a Select Committee.

Lord *Kenyon* thought a Secret Committee was necessary in the present case, to afford due protection to the witnesses.

The *Lord Chancellor* said, that in substance it would be found that there was no difference in the protection given by either kind of Committee. No member of a Committee could in either case divulge what happened on it, without committing a breach of privilege. It was true that it was a greater offence to divulge what happened in a Secret Committee; but he understood that a Select Committee would be found to afford every measure of protection to the witnesses. The members of the Select Committee had it in their power to exclude all persons not being members; and he had no doubt that they would exercise that power, if they considered it necessary, for the protection of the witnesses. A Secret Committee must, however, exclude all strangers whatever, even the officers of the House, which would be inconvenient.

Motion agreed to.

Juries (Ireland).] The Order of the Day for the third reading of this Bill was read.

On the Question that the Bill be now read a third time.

The Duke of *Wellington*, after apologizing to their Lordships for having been the occasion of postponing the Bill to the present day, proceeded to observe, that the present was not a time when such a measure as that before their Lordships ought to be adopted. They had lately passed a bill—the Coercion Bill—giving to the Lord-lieutenant the power of suspending the Trial by Jury under certain circumstances in every part of Ireland, and there was another Bill in progress through the other House for suspending the ordinary operation of the law with respect to Juries in certain cases, by giving to the Government the power of changing the venue; and this, too, at a time when Trial by Jury was not a safe mode of administering justice in many parts of Ireland. He had recently received a detail of the proceedings at the late Kilkenny Assizes, which, while it showed what they had to expect from a Trial by Jury in certain cases, fully justified the measure which had lately passed the House with respect to Ireland. In the county of Kilkenny there had been during the year, 928 outrages, some of them of an insurrectionary character. There were twenty-eight commitments for the alleged crime of murder; but, in all the latter cases, no legal evidence could be procured, and the men were all discharged; forty were sentenced to transportation, and the remainder were not tried at all, from the difficulty of procuring sufficient evidence. Most of the witnesses brought forward belonged to the police, but before they gave their evidence, Government was obliged to contract with them to provide for them and their families, by sending them abroad, where they would be out of the way of those who might visit on them the usual consequences of having been instrumental to a conviction. At the late Assizes many of the jurors did not attend, though several of them were called on fines of 50*l.* and 60*l.* This would show the state of the country, and from these causes a large number of men, amounting to nearly 900, were thrown at large upon the public, without trial, though accused of very serious offences; and by a clause which had been added to the Coercion Bill in the House of Commons, they could not be tried under that Act. Yet this was the time which the Government had selected to new-model the Jury Laws, and they thought that when they had made those changes, they had provided sufficiently for the due administration of the laws of the country. But the time of bringing forward this measure was not his only objection to it—he should have strong objections to it under any circumstances. In the first place, the Judges of Ireland had almost unanimously objected to the measure. He had seen a letter signed by them, in which they stated, that they objected to the lists, and would rather rest on the responsibility of the Sheriffs' returns. Another objection which he had to the Bill was, that it reduced the qualification for Jurors far below that of England, whereas he would show that it ought to be much higher. The qualification in England was 10*l.* a-year property, or 20*l.* on a lease; or a man being a householder of a house rated at 30*l.*, or an occupier of a house with fifteen windows. In Ireland, the qualification was being a 10*l.* freeholder, or having 15*l.* a-year on lease. Now, he would ask, why was the 15*l.* leaseholder in Ireland to be considered equal to the 20*l.* leaseholder in England? Was it not known that persons of the former class were men in the humblest walks of life—generally under the dominion of their priests, and in other respects men on whose loyalty and discretion no great reliance could be placed? Would such men be fitted to discharge impartially the functions of jurors? Why not give the duty to those in a more elevated sphere in life, on whom they could place a much greater reliance? A circumstance which had happened a short time ago in the Queen's County would be an illustration of what he meant. At the Assizes for that county, a sufficient number of the common jurors had not answered to their names. The gentlemen of the county, to whose public spirit on every occasion too much praise could not be given, who were in attendance, and had not been on the Grand Jury, offered themselves as jurors, and they discharged these duties in a manner which was found most just and most serviceable to the due administration of the law. This would abundantly show, that if the qualifications of jurors were raised so as to bring in only men in the higher classes, there would be no complaint against the administration of justice in Ireland. He did not want to aggravate the impression of the distress that prevailed there at the present day; but he would ask what it was, that was the most probable cause of that distress? Was not that distress to be imputed to the insecurity of property in that country, to an inability of administering justice, and to a want of witnesses and jurors, who would fearlessly do their duty. When such was the case, he called upon their Lordships to pause, to consider the state of Ireland, and to give it only such laws as that state warranted. Nothing could be more to the interest of this country than to relieve Ireland from a state of riotous disturbance; and that interest alone ought to be sufficient to prevent their Lordships from taking such steps as it was now proposed to them to take. Let their Lordships look to the natural situation of Ireland—to its extraordinary fertility—to its navigable rivers—to its population—and they would, most assuredly, see that, if proper care were taken of its resources it could be made a means of giving immense relief to this country. When he reflected on the population and on the resources of Ireland, he did not think that he was making an exaggerated calculation when he said that, if proper care was extended towards that country, it would relieve England from at least one-third of its burdens. It was consequently, his opinion that a measure like the present ought not to pass under existing circumstances. He had another motive for opposing the Bill. A Bill on the same subject came last Session from the other House to their Lordships, and it appeared that, at the time, one of his Majesty's Ministers promised his influence to get it passed, provided another bill, desired by Government, was also allowed to pass. Their Lordships, notwithstanding, thought that the Bill ought not to pass. The present Bill was not very dissimilar from the one their Lordships had before rejected, and, consequently, he thought that this should share the same fate. Nothing, he maintained, was more fatal to the country at large than that description of political bargains, an instance of which he had just mentioned. He was not disposed to oppose the third reading of the Bill, but he would move an Amendment, to make the 11th clause of the Bill more clear. To that clause there was a proviso, which said, "Provided always, that nothing herein contained shall prevent any returning officer from the exercise of his discretion in making returns the same as he had been accustomed to do under former laws;" but those laws were repealed by the Bill itself. Now, he would propose a proviso to this effect, " Provided always, that the Sheriff or Sub-sheriff, or other returning officer, shall be bound to insert all such names as are not suspected persons or persons procured."

The *Lord Chancellor* here suggested, that the Amendment could not be put until after the third reading. The better way would be to discuss the Amendment now, and let it be put after the third reading.

The Duke of Wellington acquiesced.

Viscount *Melbourne* said, he did not see that the present time, or the circumstances of the country, had anything whatever to do with this Bill. It was perfectly true, that riots and outrages in Ireland had rendered it necessary to empower the Lord-lieutenant of Ireland to suspend the Trial by Jury in some parts of Ireland; but he could not see why that should prevent the Government from endeavouring to give those improvements to the Jury system in other parts of the country of which it was capable. This was a proof, if any were required, that it was not the intention of his Majesty's Ministers to prolong the duration of the Coercion Bill beyond the time when it might be absolutely necessary—that they were thus endeavouring to improve the Jury system generally. The circumstances which had taken place in the county of Kilkenny had, in his opinion, nothing to do with the question before the House. There was nothing new in the existence of such events from the very earliest period in which she had been subjected to English laws. As to the objection made to the Bill by the Judges in Ireland, the noble Duke had greatly overstated the fact. The Judges had objected to the lists, but they approved of the qualification. They thought the amount of property was sufficient. He had, it was true, read some charges delivered by some of the Irish Judges, of great talent and eminence, to Grand Juries, and in these they stated objections to the measure which were, to say the least of them, not at all consistent with their previous signatures in approbation of the measure. They approved of the responsibility of the Sheriff, but that responsibility would be left untouched, except that he was bound to take his list of Jurors from the Jurors' book. The noble Duke had appealed to the outrages which took place in Ireland, and to the natural advantages which that country possessed, which, if well applied, would make her an aid instead of being a burthen to this country; but the noble Duke must know that, in the history of nations, more than one instance could be found of countries possessing great local advantages, but at the same time sunk to the lowest depths of misery and disgrace. He would not then enter into the question of the causes of the present distressed condition of Ireland; but he thought, that many of them might be traced to the violence with which the laws and religion of England had been attempted to be forced on that country without any previous preparation of the minds of the people. But that was a subject which belonged rather to history than to political debate. The only way to reconcile the minds of a people to a new policy was to call them to participate in its benefits. He maintained, with all submission to the noble Duke, that this Bill raised the qualification of Jurors in Ireland. He was anxious for the adoption of that Bill, not only for the advantage of which it would be productive towards Ireland, but on account likewise of the beneficial effects which it would accomplish in England also. He trusted also, that the circumstance of its having been recommended by the Commissioners of Judicial Inquiry would prove with their Lordships no trifling argument in its favour. Besides that, the Bill was one which had been promised to Ireland by several successive governments, and he was himself able to testify, that when he took office in Ireland some years ago, he found that a bill of that nature had been prepared, and that a draft of it was in his office. Perhaps it was this to which the noble Duke alluded when he spoke of a bargain, as he (Lord Melbourne) had no knowledge of any other bargain than that the Irish Government had long been pledged to the measure. The Bill was one, certainly, which, on that account, was expected by the people—of course he did not go the length of saying that every thing the people expected should, on that account alone, be conceded to their wishes, but amongst other considerations, the circumstance of its being desired and confidently expected, ought to have its weight with the House. On all those grounds, then, he did think that the House would do wisely in reading the Bill as it then stood, a third time; with respect to the Amendment of the noble Duke, it appeared to him that it would be inconsistent with the English Bill.

The Debate was, on the Motion of the Duke of Wellington, adjourned till the Monday following.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, *April* 26, 1833.

Minutes.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of Mr. Tooke, an Account of the Sittings held, and Fees received, and Business done by the Court of Review, and the other Courts of Bankruptcy, since their Establishment.—On the Motion of Mr. O'Dwyer, an Account of the Fees received, and Duty performed, by the Officers of the Privy Council in Ireland.—On the Motion of Mr. Alderman Thompson, an Account of the Number of British and Foreign Vessels which cleared at the Custom House, London, for Ports in Holland, from the 1st of January, 1832, to the 6th November, 1832; and the same, from the 6th of November, 1832, to the 25th April, 1833.

Petitions presented. By Mr. George Evans, from Dublin, for a Repeal of the Probate Duty.—By Mr. H. Curteis, Major Beauclerk, Mr. Pigott, Sir John Key, and Mr. Lennard, from several Places,—against the Assessed Taxes.—By Mr. H. Curteis, and Mr. N. Fitzsimon, from several Places,—against Tithes.—By Major Beauclerk, from the Barony of Castlereagh, for an Amendment of the Grand Jury Laws.—By Sir H. Parnell, from Forfarshire, for a Modification or Repeal of the Duties on Rum, Sugar, Coffee, and Cocoa, imported from Brazil; from the same Place, against a Renewal of the East-India Company's Charter: also for the Reduction of the Duty on Fire Insurances, and on Marine Insurances.—By Mr. Tyrell, Colonel Grant, Mr. H. Handley, Mr. Ryder, Mr. Plumptre, and Sir E. Knatchbull, from several Places,—against the Malt Duty.—By Sir E. Knatchbull, from Aylesford, for a Law to enforce the Better Observance of the Sabbath; and from the Clergy of Canterbury, against the Irish Church Reform Bill.—By Mr. G. F. Young, Mr. Hardy, Lord Molyneux, the Solicitor-General, Sir R. Price, Sir G. Staunton, Mr. Cavendish, Mr. Pease, Mr. Benett, Mr. W. Whitmore, Mr. Steuart, Mr. Kennedy, Mr. E. Barnard, Sir Ralph Lopes, Mr. Herbert Curteis, Mr. Thicknesse, Mr. Langdale, Mr. Divett, Mr. Hoskins, Mr. Tyrell, Sir George Grey, Mr. Mildmay, Mr. Marsland, Mr. Hodgson, Mr. E. B. Clive, Mr. Tennyson, Lord Morpeth, Mr. Welby, Mr. R. Oswald, Mr. Brodie, Mr. Blamire, Mr. R. Walker, Sir Gray Skipwith, Mr. H. Handley, Mr. Plumptre, Sir W. Chaytor, Lord Viscount Lumley, Mr. Rider, Sir H. Verney, Mr. Walter, Mr. J. Parker, Mr. Methuen, Mr. J. G. Heathcote, Mr. Dashwood, Mr. Wilks, Lord John Russell, and Mr. Fenton, from a Number of Places,—against Slavery.—By Mr. Lennard, from Dissenters of Bocking, and another Place,—for a Charter to the London University.—By Mr. Tennyson, from certain Retail Butchers of London, against Legislative Enactments relative to the Observance of the Lord's Day.—By Sir G. Staunton, and several Hon. Members, from many Places,—for the Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By Mr. Hodgson, and Mr. Plumptre, from Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and St. Andrews, for a Repeal of the Duty on Stamped Receipts.—By Colonel Verner, from Carrickfergus, against the Church Temporalities (Ireland) Bill.—By Mr. Walter, from the Licensed Victuallers of Henley-upon-Thames, complaining of the Inequality of Taxation as regarding Innkeepers.—By Mr. R. Walker, from Bury, Lancaster, for Removing the Civil Disabilities affecting the Jews.—By Mr. Oswald, from Beith and Pittenween, for Amending the Law of Church Patronage in Scotland.—By Messrs. Dunlop, and Oswald, from the Hand-loom Weavers of several Places, for a Board of Trade, and for Relief.—By Mr. Hodgson, Mr. O'Dwyer, Mr. Fort, Mr. Wilks, and Mr. Walter, from Clitheroe, Cashel, and other Places,—for Amending the Laws relative to Corporations.—By Lord Morpeth, Mr. Brotherton, Mr. Wilks, and Mr. T. B. Lennard, from Rochdale, and other Places,—for Relief to the Dissenters from the Civil Disabilities affecting them.—By Lord John Russell, and Mr. Fitzsimon, from Congregations of Separatists, Dublin and Clara,—for substituting in their Case a Solemn Affirmation instead of an Oath.

Agricultural Distress.] On the Motion of Lord Althorp that the Order of the Day for going into a Committee of Supply be read,

The Marquess of *Chandos* rose pursuant to notice to propose a Resolution on the subject of Agricultural Distress. The noble Marquess referred to the Budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in which he observed no adequate relief was proposed to be given to the suffering agricultural classes of this country. The full amount of the relief from taxation, proposed by the noble Lord to be given to the agricultural classes was not more than 33,000*l.* Tiles did not much concern that class, particularly as tiles used in draining at present paid no duty. Then there was no remission of tax pressing upon agriculturists but that upon taxed carts and bailiffs. These items, although satisfactory as far as they went, yet did not go far enough. Every landed Gentleman in that House well knew, that upon looking round about his estate he saw nothing but distress, which had now gone on increasing for some time. He did not wish to put the agriculturists above other classes; but he wished to see them put upon a level with other classes; that was all he desired, and all that his Resolution proposed. Year after year they had been told to wait for relief from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but each year found them where the last had left them in point of taxation. Speaking from his own experience, so far as the county of Buckingham was concerned, he could confidently state, that the agricultural labourers were in a state of great distress; and he knew of no means by which they could be relieved, unless something could be done to enable the farmer to pay good wages. If something to this effect were not done, a greater number of labourers must go upon the parish for support, and confusion would be the natural sequel. He only called upon the noble Lord the Chancellor of the Exchequer to dole out his relief to the agriculturist as well as to the manufacturer. He wished the noble Lord would show him where relief had been given to the farmer in any of the remissions of taxation that had taken place within the last five or six years. He well knew the difficulties the noble Lord had to contend against, and it was not his wish to embarrass him or his Majesty's Government. He was only discharging what he considered to be his duty in bringing forward the claims of a large class of his Majesty's subjects. He did not wish to keep the House from the business of the evening. He would not, therefore, dwell upon the subject at greater length. It could not be denied, that the agricultural classes were at present suffering much from distress, and that they were as deserving of the consideration of the House as any other class. Had he not taken the present opportunity of making those few observations, such was the state of the business fixed for the consideration of the House, that he should not have had an opportunity for two months to come. His Resolution would pledge the House to nothing further than the simple declaration that the agriculturists were as much entitled to relief from taxation as any other class. He did not see how such a Resolution could be objected to; and he hoped the landed Gentlemen in that House would at all events support him. He called upon them, and the Representatives of other interests in the House, to look at the state of the country, with a falling tenantry and a distressed race of agricultural labourers, and then to say whether they would negative his Resolution. The noble Marquess concluded by moving as follows:—"Resolved, That in any reduction of taxation which may be considered expedient, it is necessary that the interests of the agricultural portion of the community should be duly considered."

Mr. *Robert Palmer* seconded the Motion, and assured the House that the farmers did really suffer severely from distress. It was quite as necessary that they should be relieved as that other portions of the community should have taxes removed from them. They required relief as much as the people of the metropolis, though they were not able to get up such a large meeting as that of yesterday. The noble Lord had only relieved the agricultural interest to the extent of about 36,000*l.* for that was the amount of the reduction on taxed carts and bailiffs. As to the other petty matters which were supposed to relieve them, he believed that they affected the farmers but little, if at all. He entreated the noble Lord to believe, that this Motion was not made with a view to embarrass the Government, but only from a knowledge of the absolute necessity of doing something for the farmer.

Mr. *Cobbett* said, that all portions of the people required relief from the very heavy taxation which now oppressed them. All classes of the community were justified in making efforts to relieve themselves; but the question was, what must the Ministers do in order to be able to take off these burthens? At a county meeting in Kent, he had told the people that they must tell the Government what part of the expenditure could be reduced, and must be reduced, and that they would stand by the Government in its reduction.

Lord *Althorp* said, that it was impossible not to agree with the principle of the Motion of the noble Lord. He could not, however, quite agree with the mode of reasoning of the noble Marquess, or of the hon. Gentleman, who appeared to think that there was no relief for the cultivators of the soil, unless taxes that pressed directly upon them were removed. He was not of that opinion. So far from it, he believed that taxes which pressed directly upon them would not relieve them nor the country so much as other taxes of a more general nature. On what did the profits, emoluments, and livelihood of the cultivators of the soil depend? On the consumption of their produce. Now the taxes the removal of which would most relieve them were taxes upon the productive industry of the country, which interfered with the means of the consumption of the country. His object had been to take off those taxes, the removal of which would give the most general relief to the country; for though the amount of the relief might not be great, the comfort of the country would be increased to that amount; and by so doing, he was relieving, not only the other portions of the people, but the agricultural interest itself. He denied, however, that the reductions he had effected had been of little use to the agricultural interest. He was certain that farmers would feel considerable benefit from the reduction of the duty on tiles, as well as that upon taxed carts and bailiffs. He had before now stated why he could not remove the Malt-tax. He knew not what tax the noble Marquess would have him remove.

The Marquess of *Chandos:* The tax upon the insurance of agricultural stock.

Lord *Althorp* thought, that the taxes he had proposed to take off were much better selected than that mentioned by the noble Marquess. He could not object to the sentiment contained in the Resolution, but he did object to it when proposed as an Amendment upon the Motion he (Lord Althorp) had previously made. It would interfere with the progress of other measures.

Mr. *Methuen* admitted the existence of distress amongst the agricultural classes, but agreed with his noble friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in thinking that relief might be administered indirectly by a reduction of taxation as well as directly. He knew of an instance, which he believed was one of many, where twenty-five manufacturing workmen came to an agricultural parish to burthen the rates, in consequence of their being thrown out of employment in the town in which they had been working. He thought that as the noble Lord had agreed to a Committee on manufacturing distress the noble Marquess should for the present withdraw his Motion.

Sir *Thomas Freemantle* observed, that the noble Lord had saved them from the difficulty in which the hon. member for Oldham would place them, by himself admitting, that he had a surplus available for the reduction of taxation. The question then fairly arose as to what taxes in particular they should remove or reduce with this surplus. He could not agree with the noble Lord that to take a tax off one class was as efficient relief to another class as if the tax were taken off that other class, any more than he could agree that if two men were climbing a hill, and the pack were taken off one man's shoulders, that that would be the same relief to the other as if it had been taken off his. It was no satisfaction to the agriculturist when he asked to have the tax taken off the insurance of agricultural property to tell him that the shipping interest was greatly relieved by having the tax on marine insurances taken off. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had only thrown out a tub to the whale, and he hoped the landed interest would not go swimming after that tub. The agriculturists had exhibited the most exemplary patience under their distresses; and had it not been for the farmers taking up the Reform Bill and throwing their weight into the scale of Ministers, he could assure the noble Lord that that Bill would not have passed. They were now getting tired of the word Reform, which had done nothing for them. On that score, if on none other, the noble Lord, he thought, ought to do something for that interest.

Mr. *Slaney* added his request to that of the hon. member for Wiltshire, for the withdrawal of the Resolution; but, at the same time, he expressed a hope that the noble Lord would grant the remission of the tax on insurances on agricultural property. A Bill, however, would soon be before the House—he meant the Bill for the commutation of tithes, which, he trusted, would fulfil the prospects it held out of affording great and permanent relief to the agricultural portion of the community.

Mr. *Rigby Wason* thought the position laid down by the noble Lord (Lord Althorp) with respect to the effects of reductions in taxation so clear that no one could dispute it. He thought it the soundest policy to benefit the agriculturists by enabling the manufacturing classes to purchase more freely the produce of the land. He agreed with the noble Marquess in thinking, that if the noble Lord the Chancellor of the Exchequer should persist in his intention to reduce the duty on marine insurances, it would be only just, that he should take off the duty upon insurances of agricultural produce. If, however, his noble friend could show, as no doubt he could, that the effect of the duty upon marine insurances had been, that a great number of them were at present made in Holland, that circumstance would take that tax out of the rule which it was proper to adhere to, that no particular interest should be relieved unless the doing so would afford relief to the general interests of the country. This tax was taken off not so much to benefit a particular class as to prevent us losing a beneficial employment of capital. Let the House, he would say, determine to lay on a Property-tax, and then the agricultural interest might expect to obtain that relief which it demanded, in common with the commercial, manufacturing, and trading interests of the country.

Mr. *Henry Handley* said, that as the Representative of a large agricultural county, he must state that the agricultural interest was in a most deplorable state of distress at present. Since the noble Lord had brought forward his financial statement he (Mr. Handley) had received several letters from that part of the country, expressive not only of disappointment, but of despair, in consequence of that statement. The agricultural interest had suffered a long time in silence; instead of exhibiting what had been termed "an ignorant impatience of taxation," they had displayed, on the contrary, an ignorant patience of it; but they would do so no longer. They saw that almost every day deputations from other interests were waiting upon the noble Lord, and they uniformly saw the effect of such interviews afterwards manifested in the removal of those burthens of which those interests complained. The agricultural interest were determined to profit by the example, and very probably some of these fine days he (Mr. Handley) should have the pleasure, in company with others, of waiting upon the noble Lord.

Mr. *Cutlar Fergusson* said, that he for one approved of the Budget of the noble Lord. Whether the noble Lord might not go further in the way of reduction he would not now argue; but as far as the noble Lord went, he thought that the noble Lord had made a judicious selection of taxes for reduction; at the same time he must say that in the proposed reduction of taxes sufficient relief was not afforded to the agricultural interest. He would ask the noble Lord to give his favourable consideration to the claims of that interest. It was one, with regard to the distress of which the noble Lord himself admitted that there was no doubt, and, therefore, it was one which he should be most ready to believe. The noble Lord, according to his own statement, would, after the reduction of taxes which he proposed, have still a surplus of 500,000*l.* Now, under the particular circumstances of the agricultural interest at present, he (Mr. Fergusson) thought that a portion of that surplus might be applied to the relief of that interest. The surplus had certainly been often risked before, under circumstances that called much less for such a sacrifice. Unless something was done, and that speedily too, for the relief of the agricultural interest, and for remedying the abuses of the Poor-laws, the land-owners, the land-occupiers, and the labourers would be involved in one common ruin, and the paupers would become the proprietors of the soil. He thought, at all events, that the noble Lord should give up the duty upon insurances upon agricultural produce. His doing so would afford a sensible relief to the agricultural interest. He would certainly vote for the Motion of the noble Marquess. In doing so, he disclaimed any idea or wish of embarrassing a Government which he was most desirous to support.

Sir *Matthew White Ridley* said, that as the noble Marquess had held out as a sort of threat, that the farmers would know their friends by the division upon this Motion, he was anxious to state his reasons for voting against it. He was from principle, and from self-interest, as firm a friend to the agricultural interest as the noble Marquess, but he could not vote for this Motion, and for this simple reason— that he did not see any tax which was immediately pressing upon the agricultural interest, that could be reduced consistently with the maintenance of the revenue, so as to afford that interest effectual relief. His next reason for voting against this Motion was, that as the noble Lord the Chancellor of the Exchequer had given notice of the appointment of a Committee on the subject of agricultural distress, it appeared to him that the House should wait until that inquiry was terminated, and the Committee had made its Report, before it pledged itself to any particular course upon the subject.

Mr. *Hume* said, he was as anxious to afford relief to the agricultural interest, as the noble Lord, the member for Buckinghamshire; he would, however, relieve it simultaneously with all other interests in the country. He confessed that he had been astonished by the speech of the hon. member for Kirkcudbright. That hon. Member was, it appeared, of opinion, that of all classes of the country the agricultural interest most required relief. Now, when Gentlemen talked so, they seemed to forget the monopoly which had been so long granted to the agricultural interest upon that most important of all articles— the article of food. For the advantage of the agricultural interest the people of this country had been obliged to pay for their food more than they otherwise would be obliged to pay for it. Every loaf of bread, every ounce of flour, and every ounce of meat, that were consumed by the people of this country, were taxed for the peculiar benefit of the agricultural interest. The amount to which the people were taxed for that purpose was, he believed, not less than 12,000,000*l.* a-year. At all events, the amount which the people had to sustain of the monopoly of the agricultural interest was extremely large. Before, therefore, the advocates of that interest put forward its claims in that House they should come there with clean hands—they should divest themselves, in the first instance, of that monopoly which they possessed at the expense of the nation at large. They were told much about the suffering of the agricultural interest, but all the other interests of the country were suffering as much as, if not more than, the agricultural interest. It was not, therefore, fair to hold up any particular interest as deserving of peculiar exemption. This Motion was not called for. If it should be carried, he would then move as an Amendment upon the main question, that instead of the words "it is necessary that the interests of the agricultural portion of the community should be duly considered" these words should be inserted, that "the interests of all classes of the community should be duly considered." He would do so on the principle that all classes were equally entitled to relief.

Lord *Ebrington* said, that connected as he was with the agricultural interest, he must enter his protest against the assumption of the noble Marquess that those who voted against this measure were hostile to that interest. The advocates for this Motion were not able to propose any plan of relief for the agricultural interest that would be consistent with the maintenance of that good faith that was due to the public creditor, and with the maintenance of the general interests of the country. He would vote against the Motion of the noble Marquess, the effect of which, if it should be carried, would be to make an impression that the country was hostile to the whole of the Budget that had been brought forward by his noble friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He thought that his noble friend had done as much as he could in the way of reduction of taxation, taking into consideration what was due to the different interests of the country. At the same time he trusted that his noble friend would find it practicable, without any derangement of his Budget, to do that which would afford a material relief to the agricultural interest—namely, reduce the duty upon insurances of agricultural produce. Considering what had occurred in the country during the last two years, at which he should only glance, it was plain, he thought, that the reduction of the duty upon insurances on agricultural stock would afford great relief.

Sir *John Tyrell* was not surprised at the attack which the hon. member for Middlesex had made upon the agricultural interest. He understood that the tenants of the hon. Member, on his property, in Essex, were offering premiums for farms on other properties, in order to get away from his. Such was the encouragement which the hon. Member afforded to the agricultural interest. He would cordially support the Motion. It appeared to him that those who expressed themselves friendly to the agricultural interest, and who nevertheless opposed this Motion, took an odd way of manifesting their friendship for it.

Sir *John Wrottesley* said, he would not give his vote upon this occasion without some explanation. He was not for giving relief to any particular interest at the expense of other interests. He thought that all the interests of the country were equally entitled to relief. It was his intention if the Motion which stood for this night, on the part of the hon. member for Lincolnshire, for the reduction of the Malt-duty to half its present amount, should have been brought forward, to vote for it. [Sir W. Ingilby here intimated that he would bring it forward.] He (Sir J. Wrottesley) would certainly vote for it on these terms, that the House should consent to re-impose a duty on beer. It was his firm belief that the working classes derived no benefit from the reduction of the duty on beer, but that, on the contrary, the effect of that measure was that they had been deluged with poisonous filth.

Mr. *Sinclair* cordially supported the Motion of the noble Marquess. He believed that, unless relief were speedily afforded, the landed interest would soon be on the verge of utter ruin. Much was said about the march of intellect, but the proprietors and the occupiers of the soil had to guard against the march of confiscation. His constituents were chiefly engaged in agricultural pursuits, and were distinguished by their intelligence and industrious habits; but they felt it almost impossible to contend against their present difficulties. In the last letter which he had received from Caithness, he was assured, by a public-spirited proprietor, that "agriculturists never were more depressed, and that unless public burthens be diminished, they must all stop payment." He should not at present discuss the sources of the pressure of which landlords and farmers were complaining, but he could not help considering the monetary system as one great and leading cause. Indeed the present distress and the present currency seemed to him as inseparable as the Siamese twins; whenever you look at the one, the other unavoidably stares you in the face. The success of this proposition would be hailed with satisfaction by the proprietors and tenantry of Scotland as an omen of approaching relief.

Sir *Edward Knatchbull* said, that the opinions of the hon. Member (Mr. Hume) would not surprise this House, but they certainly would be likely to lead persons out of this House much astray as to the objects, and intentions, and interests of the agricultural portion of the community. He (Sir E. Knatchbull) was an advocate for the agricultural interest, but he never attempted to support it at the expense of any other interest. He sought for justice —he sought for right—he sought, as he was bound to do, for protection to the agricultural interest; but he sought for no monopoly, neither did he seek to enforce the rights of the agricultural interest with "unclean hands." The hon. member for Middlesex thought, perhaps, that he might gain some popularity by attacking the agricultural interest; but he could assure the hon. Member, that any such popularity would be of very short duration. No one could doubt but that the noble Chancellor of the Exchequer had promised a partial relief to the agricultural interests; he had promised a Committee to inquire into the nature and causes of their distress; and he had only to hope that the noble Lord would not fail in the full performance of his promise. From time to time a great deal had been said about the Corn Laws; he did not on this occasion wish to open that fertile topic of discussion; and all he would now say was, that he wished it could be fairly and dispassionately considered, while his apprehensions were that it could not. Upon principle he was called upon to support the Motion of the noble Marquess, and he only regretted, that in the remission of taxes proposed by the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, a greater degree of regard had not been paid to the agricultural interest. The remission of the tax upon tiles, and the half repeal of the duty upon soap, could not give general satisfaction, and he thought, that by this time, the noble Lord must be firmly convinced of it. The noble Lord, should recollect that up to this hour the agricultural interest had occupied but little of the attention of the House, although it must be well known that in times of peril and distress they were foremost in meeting with loyalty and cheerfulness the many burthens which were imposed upon them. These were considerations which should have their effect upon the noble Chancellor of the Exchequer, as well as with the House, and he hoped it was not yet too late for the noble Lord to reconsider his Budget, and if he could make any alteration in it, that such an alteration should be in favour of the agricultural interest.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, that his hon. friend, the member for Middlesex, was greatly misunderstood, when it was supposed that he meant anything offensive to the advocates of the agricultural interests by saying that they should come there with clean hands. The mistake only exemplified the danger of using figures of speech, and certainly his hon. friend, the member for Middlesex, was more expert at figures of arithmetic than at figures of rhetoric. All that his hon. friend meant was, that the agricultural interest should give up their monopoly in corn before they called for relief. As there was as great agricultural distress in Ireland as in England, he would vote for the Motion of the noble Marquess.

Mr. *Thomas Attwood* wished to know what was meant by the Motion of the noble Marquess. Did he mean to say that the Corn Laws did not afford sufficient protection to landowners and the landed interest? In consequence of the Resolution which was carried on Wednesday night, it would be impossible long to retain the Corn Laws. He would take that opportunity to give notice, that upon an early day he would move for the total repeal of all the Corn Laws, and of all laws of any kind—[*Immense Laughter.*]. If hon. Members would wait till his sentence had been concluded they would have spared their laughter. He now gave notice that he would, on an early day, move for a total repeal of the Corn Laws, and of all laws the effect of which was to impose a duty upon the importation of the articles of food. He had had that notice for some weeks in his pocket, and he was determined at an early day to bring the Motion forward: while they had a restricted and contracted currency, it would be impossible to keep up the Corn Laws.

The House divided on the Amendment: Ayes 90; Noes 118.—Majority against the Resolution 28.

List of the Noes.

Aglionby, H. A.
Arbuthnot, Hon. H.
Attwood, M.
Balfour, J.
Baring, A.
Barnard, E. G.
Bell, M.
Bethell, R.
Blackstone, W. S.
Blamire, W.
Bruce, Lord E.
Burrell, Sir C.
Chaplin, T.
Clive, Hon. R.
Cobbett, W.
Crawley, S.
Curteis, H. B.
Curteis, Captain E.B.
Denison, J. E.
Dilwyn, L. W.
Dugdale, W. S.
Duncombe, Hon. W.
Egerton, T.
Estcourt, T. B.
Fancourt, Major
Ferguson, Captain G.
Ferguson, A. C.
Fielden, J.
Finn, W. F.
Fitzsimon, C.
Folkes, Sir W. M.
Fox, S. L.
French, F.
Gordon, Hon. Cap. W.
Greville, Hon. Sir J.
Handley, H.
Hanmer, Sir J:
Heathcote, G. I.
Herbert, Hon. S.
Hodges, T. L.
Ingilby, Sir W. A.
Inglis, Sir R.
Kerrison, Sir E.
King, E. B.
Knatchbull, Sir E.
Leech, J.
Lennard, T. B.
Lincoln, Earl of
Lygon, Hon. Colonel
Manners, Lord R.
Martin, T. B.
Maxwell, Sir J.
Maxwell, T. W.
Nicholl, J.
O'Connell, D.
O'Connell, M.
Ossulston, Lord
Oswald, R. A.
Palmer, R.
Parker, Sir H.
Patten, W.
Pease, J.
Perceval, Colonel
Plumptre, J. P.
Rickford, W.
Ruthven, E. S.
Ruthven, E.
Sanderson, R.
Sheppard, T.
Simeon, Sir R.
Sinclair, G.
Smith, T. A.
Somerset, Lord G.
Stanley, E.
Stuart, Captain
Tennyson, Rt. Hon. C.
Trelawney, W. L. S.
Tynte, C. J. K.
Tyrell, Sir J. T.
Verner, W.
Vincent, Sir F.
Walsh, Sir J. B.
Ward, H. G.
Wason, R.
Wemyss, Captain J.
Williams, W. A.
Windham, W. H.
Yorke, Captain C. P.

TELLERS.

Chandos, Marquis of
Fremantle, Sir T.

PAIRED-OFF.

Hall, B.
Bankes, W.

Malt Duties.] Sir *William Ingilby* then rose to bring forward the Motion of which he had given notice for a reduction of the duty upon malt to 10*s.* a quarter. The hon. Baronet said, that this tax pressed most heavily upon every interest in the country, and he considered that its repeal, or even partial remission, would be regarded as a boon by the people generally, without regard to the particular interest or class with which they were connected. The manufacturer of Birmingham would experience from it as much relief as the farmer; and therefore all were equally interested in the question, which it was his duty now to bring under the consideration of the House. From a knowledge of the fact he could state to the House that barley, and that, too, in his own county, was at the present time selling at a lower price than the duty which, if brought to the maltster's, must be paid on it to the Government. Under such a state of things, it was apparent that neither the farmer nor the landlord could much longer exist. They were both going as fast as they could to ruin; for, oppressed as they were by tithes, taxes, rents, and divers other charges, what else could happen? But if the landlord should go to ruin, he should very much like to know what was to become of the fund-lord. If the former were to fall into decay, was it likely the existence of the latter could be long protracted? In fact, they were both so much involved in one common interest, and each being obliged to depend so much upon the other, that the destruction of the landlord must inevitably bring about the overthrow of the fund-lord. This being the case, he earnestly hoped the noble Lord (Lord Althorp) would, while time was yet allowed him for the purpose, reconsider his Budget, and endeavour to find out some means of providing a revenue without enforcing the Malt-tax. Looking at it in a moral point of view this impost was bad, and one of the many evils resulting from it was, that beer-shops were now as numerous all over the country as toadstools. It placed the enjoyment of a wholesome beverage at his own home beyond the reach of the poor man, and drove him to the beer-shops; and hence it was, that those nuisances had so fearfully increased in all directions. He contended that a larger revenue was produced by the former low duty upon this article than had been received since its increase to its present amount, and this he urged as a reason in favour of the proposition which he intended to make. If the capital of the landlord was to be destroyed, if the tenant was to be unable to pay his rent, how he, (Sir W. Ingilby) should be glad to learn, would the fund-lord be able to come at his dividends? He should, indeed, be sorry to see the landlord and the fund-lord in a state of warfare; and if ever such an event should happen, the day on which it took place would be an awful one for the country; but he did think that the landlord should be protected, for it should be borne in mind by the House that he it was by whom the fund-lord was guaranteed. The protection, therefore, that was extended to the one would be an advantage and an additional security to the other, and if it was really intended to preserve the national honour towards the public creditor untarnished, that would best be done by consulting the well-being of the landlord. He begged to assure the House that he did not bring forward the subject from party or personal motives, but solely for the good of the country, and to satisfy the public mind that the interests of the poor were not wholly neglected by the Legislature. He was old enough to remember the time when hardly any sober or industrious man would be seen in an ale house, but now he lamented to think, the working classes being unable, by reason of the operation of this impost, to enjoy themselves at home, were compelled as it were to take refuge in those Tom-and-Jerry shops. But the noble Lord must be fully sensible of the baneful consequences of the present system, and therefore it was, that he (Sir William Ingilby) hoped the noble Lord would soon discover some plan by means of which the Malt tax might be removed. Perhaps the noble Lord would turn his attention to finding a substitute for this tax, for he might depend upon it the country would never be satisfied to have a revenue raised from such a source. If he (Sir William Ingilby) were to be made Chancellor of the Exchequer—if he were to fill that responsible office—he did not know but that in the course of time he would be found following in the footsteps of his predecessors, and, like them, endeavouring to ruin the country by showing a preference to the fund-lord over the landlord; but in the frame of mind in which he then was, he must say, that he should be very strongly disposed to approach the rich men in the city, and out of the mass of wealth lying idle there, endeavour to obtain a capital to be applied to the purposes of the State. He knew of one man who, on being called home to his long account, left behind him no less a sum than 800,000*l.* It might be supposed that the possessor of so much wealth paid taxes and tithes, and kept up a large establishment in houses and servants; but what was the fact? Why, that he never paid taxes nor tithes, nor did he keep anything but an old woman and a tom cat. Here there was a large mass of money that was wholly unprofitable to the State. He brought forward this Motion in accordance with a pledge which he had given, and whenever he pledged his word to do anything, that thing was most commonly done. He had endeavoured to get some hon. Gentleman who possessed more ability than he did to take the matter off his hands: but being unable to induce any one to take the matter up, he had been obliged to make a virtue of necessity, and undertake the task, onerous as it was, himself. He begged, however, to assure the House, that it was far from his object to embarrass his Majesty's Ministers, but he could, at the same time, assure the noble Lord, that even the remission of this tax which was now asked would, if conceded, confer a very great boon upon the people at large, for by them this impost was regarded as odious. The Malt-duties at present produced a revenue of nearly 5,000,000*l.*, and it might, perhaps, be considered unreasonable if he were to call upon the noble Lord to remit so large a sum; but, under all the circumstances, he would submit to the consideration of the House whether the noble Lord ought not to be content with 2,500,000*l.*, upon the principle that half a loaf was better than no bread. By agreeing to so reasonable a proposition the noble Lord would greatly oblige, not only him, but the country. The hon. Baronet moved a Resolution, "That the duty upon malt be reduced from 20*s.* 8*d.* the quarter to 10*s.* the quarter."

Mr. *Parrott* seconded the Motion. He was satisfied the reduction proposed by the hon. Baronet would not only benefit the agricultural classes, but be a very great advantage to the public generally. In his opinion it would be practicable to remit this tax without occasioning any diminution in the revenue. The remission of half the tax, as proposed by the Resolution of the hon. Baronet, might cause a loss to the revenue of 100,000*l.* The whole amount of the tax was 4,800,000*l.* and if a proper reduction were to take place in salaries of public officers, and the abolition of sinecure places, he would undertake to say that its total repeal would not occasion a loss of more than from 1,200,000*l.* to 1,500,000*l.* to the coffers of the Treasury. He could see no injustice in abolishing sinecures, neither would there be any in reducing the salaries of public functionaries, provided a rule of strict impartiality, extending from the highest to the lowest, was observed. This might give from 3,000,000*l.*, to 4,000,000*l.* but that he was aware would not be sufficient to enable the Government to effect any very considerable reductions in the taxation of the country. No man could be more anxious than he was to maintain the splendour and dignity of the Crown, and amply provide for the comforts of his Majesty; but, under the trying circumstances in which the empire was placed, he thought his Majesty might give up at all events 200,000*l.* of the 500,000*l.* which were paid by the country for the maintenance of the Royal Establishment. A considerable reduction might be made in the salaries of the higher Officers of State and other public functionaries. They saw one Judge with 10,000*l.* a-year, and another with 5,000*l.*; but, in his opinion, such salaries doubled that fair compensation which the services of such men entitled them to. As efficient services might be obtained for half that; and if such incomes were to be cut down to that which was reasonable, he could see no injustice in it. He could not agree to the knocking off 100*l.* from the salary of this poor clerk and 200*l.* from the salary of that, but he could have no possible objection to reducing the salaries of all public officers, whether high or low, and beginning with the high in the same proportion. This alone would give satisfaction to the people. He had given his support to Ministers whenever he could do so conscientiously, but he must say that the Budget of the noble Lord had been received by the country, not only with coldness and dissatisfaction, but was looked upon in many places with scorn and contempt.

Sir *John Sebright*, though connected with the landed interest, and representing a county in which perhaps more malt was made than in almost any other county in England, could not vote for the Resolution of his hon. friend, notwithstanding he was as anxious as any man in that House to see the Malt-duty repealed. It might naturally be expected that, circumstanced as he was, he would support the Motion of his hon. friend; but he had made it a rule ever since he had been in Parliament, and he should not now depart from that rule, never to allow personal or local interests to interfere with the general good. He did not think this a time when it was reasonable to ask Ministers to take of this tax, and if they were to comply with the wish of every hon. Gentleman who desired the removal of a particular tax, they would soon be without means to carry on the Government of the country. The shopkeepers and others complained bitterly of the pressure of the House and Window-tax, but he denied that they had any right to complain for it was not by them but by the landlord that those and all other taxes were paid. If no such burthens existed, the landlord would lay an additional rent that would be an equivalent for those taxes; and who would deny his right to do so? So that in no case would the tenant be in a better situation than he was; for, after all, it was not on him the burthen fell. The tradesman took the shop to carry on his trade, and whether he paid his rent partly to the landlord and partly to the Government was perfectly immaterial to him. It was, he thought, obvious that the Government could not take off this tax without substituting some other in its stead, and before he consented to its removal he should like to know how the deficiency it would occasion in the revenue was to be supplied. If taxes were to be removed in this way he should like to know what was to become of the national debt, or in what way the public creditor was to receive his interest. He fully agreed that a reduction of the Malt-tax would be of great advantage to the agricultural classes and the country at large; but at present he did not see how it could be spared; wherefore he would vote against the Resolution of the hon. Baronet. He should do so from a sense of his public duty, and because he thought it would be for the general good, for he never would vote for so discreditable an object as that of supporting any proposition merely to gain popularity.

Mr. *Benett* felt the difficulty which the hon. Baronet who had just sat down had pointed out, and he would not support the Motion for the reduction of this tax, unless he could point out how the interests of the country and public faith might be maintained without it. He had voted in the minority on the Motion of the hon. member for Whitehaven. It had been said that that Motion was a dishonest one, but he denied that he had voted for it with any dishonest intention. He had never proposed to himself a depreciation of the currency, and if that had been the object, he should not have been a party to it. With respect to finding a substitute for a tax proposed to be taken off, he knew the doctrine which was held by Gentlemen on that (the Ministerial) side of the House when they sat upon the opposite side of the House. Did they never vote for a reduction of taxes without pointing out how the deficiency might be supplied? He knew that it was their constant practice to do so. When they had been asked to point out a substitute for a tax which they asked to have taken off, what was the reply? Why, that they had nothing to do with finding a substitute; it was enough for them to show that the tax was a bad one, without being also obliged to point out a substitute. He certainly did not like to proceed upon this principle, but he at the same time was anxious to see a great commutation of taxes effected. He was, he repeated, anxious to keep faith with the national creditor; but still he was desirous of reducing the taxes of the country. What he wished to see was a tax upon property. Those who possessed property ought to pay for its protection, for it was they alone who were benefitted. The mode of assessing taxes he considered as unfair, for the burthen was not placed as it ought to be, on those who possessed property, and consequently required protection, but upon the necessitous. Without going deeply into the Malt-tax, he considered it one that ought to be remitted, and he only regretted that the hon. Baronet had moved for its total removal. Whenever that was done he should be prepared to show how a taxation sufficient to answer the exigencies of the State and keep faith with the public creditor could be collected. It was his opinion that property and not necessity, should be taxed. A tax on property was considered a war tax; but, for his part, he should wish to see it levied in peace, because he regarded it as less oppressive than any other which could be devised. He should support the Resolution.

Sir *George Philips* felt considerable interest in this subject, but he had voted against the Motion of the noble Marquess, because he did not perceive that it would be productive of good. He thought that several Members who had spoken in the late discussions had fallen into a great mistake in supposing that the reductions of taxes which had taken place in certain branches of trade and industry were of no benefit to farmers, but a reduction of taxes on any branch of industry must, indirectly, benefit the agricultural interest. For his own part, as a Member of that House he was not disposed to divide any responsibility with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but was rather inclined to acquiesce in the proposed arrangements of that noble Lord, unless it could be shown that the proposed reductions would confer no benefit. Knowing as he did the willingness of the noble Lord to reduce the burthens of the country he was disposed to give him his support. It was said, and probably with truth, that the country was dissatisfied with the amount of the proposed reduction, but, whatever might be the extent of that dissatisfaction, he was quite sure a great part of it arose from undue expectations which had been raised in the public mind. It was quite clear to any man of reflection that no such extent of reduction could take place as that which had been suggested in several quarters. He meant it could not take place consistently with the maintenance of public faith and credit. At the same time he wished to see a further alleviation of public burthens produced by strict economy and reduction of expenditure. He did not deny the existence of some distress, but he believed it prevailed more in the agricultural than in the manufacturing districts, respecting which great exaggerations had been circulated. He had some knowledge of the state of the manufacturing districts, and had taken some pains in making inquiries of several persons who had come lately from Lancashire, and the result was that, upon a comparison of the rates of wages, and the prices of clothing, food, and necessaries of life, it would be difficult to find a period at which workmen were better paid than at present. [*A laugh.*] Some Gentlemen might laugh, but he took upon himself to say that he had better information than they had. He did not, however, deny the existence of distress, but he would repeat that, with the exception of the hand-loom weavers, the workmen were better paid than at any former period.

Mr. *Warburton* was not of opinion that a commutation of taxes was improper, provided that industry could be relieved by a fair and equitable Property-tax. But if he saw the Chancellor of the Exchequer with 13,000,000*l.* derived from a Property-tax in the Exchequer, he would not consent to repeal the duty on malt till he had first made terms with that great body of country gentlemen who would not assent to a Property-tax. Of all crops the barley crops were the most uncertain. In 1830, before the increase of consumption occasioned by the repeal of the Beer duty, the whole supply of malting barley was exhausted. If there was such a difficulty of securing a sufficient supply of barley, that the whole was consumed before the new crops were ready, before the whole of the Beer duty was taken off, that difficulty must be increased by the increased consumption, amounting to 900,000 quarters. It was not only one of the most uncertain crops, but only a small quantity of that grown was fit for malting. Of all the barley grown in Scotland, not above one-fourth could be used for this purpose. What, then, would be the consequence of taking off the Malt-duty? Why the whole of it would go into the pockets of the barley growers. It would not transfer that duty into the pockets of the consumers of beer, but would put it into the hands of the barley growers. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer, therefore, had his 13,000,000*l.* to be derived from a Property-tax, he for one would not consent to take off the Malt-duty, till the country gentlemen would allow the duty on foreign barley to be taken off. They need not be much frightened at that. The barley grown abroad was not very fit for malting; even if good, when shipped, it heated on the voyage, and was unfit for the maltster. In 1830, when barley was at 40*s.* in this country, the best Bohemian barley could not be got at Hamburgh for less than from 30*s.* to 35*s.* the quarter. Country Gentlemen need not, therefore, be alarmed at the influx of foreign barley. He would, after making terms with these gentlemen, take off the whole duty. By the present proposal, they would keep up the whole expensive machinery for levying the tax; they would still expose the manufacturer to all the present vexatious interference, and they would raise the revenue which was left to be raised from malt at an enormous per centage. He hoped, therefore, to see it removed altogether. An hon. Member had complained of the trash drunk at the beer shops. It appeared pretty conclusive by the increased consumption of malt (900,000 quarters), that much of that trash must at least have been made from malt. He believed the beer was adulterated by the publicans, and it was of no consequence who brewed it, if they adulterated it.

Sir *Eardley Wilmot* was for taking off the tax, because that would be of the greatest benefit to the morals and happiness of the people. That was, in his estimation, of more consequence than enriching the Exchequer. But he rose less to speak on this topic than to advert to another subject. He entered that House with a determination to support his Majesty's Ministers, but unless they should alter their system, it was not his intention to continue that support. He was sorry to see so much vacillation in their conduct, and he hoped they would take a more decided tone. The House, he was sure, was disposed to support them, and every independent country Gentleman, like himself, would give them his hearty support if they showed an intention, as it was their duty, to fulfil the promises they had solemnly made. They were getting into a difficult and dangerous state. At the same time, they might escape by doing justice to the country. They were exposed, on the one hand, to the pitfalls set for them by open hostility and, on the other, to the snares of pretended friendship. He was sorry to see them seduced into bye-paths, in which there was no safety,

Major *Beauclerk* rose to support the Resolution of the hon. Baronet, and would have seconded it with pleasure if he had had an opportunity. He voted for the Resolution because he was anxious to remove any part of the burthen which at present pressed so heavily on the backs of the people, and he did not know anything which would afford greater satisfaction to the people than the repeal of the Malt-duty. It was now very clear that large and important reductions must be made, because the existence of distress was universally admitted. He was glad of that admission, particularly as in consequence of that it now became the paramount duty of Parliament to effect the purposes for which they were returned, namely, the reduction of taxation. The country called for great reductions, and none, he believed would be received more gratefully than the abolition of the duty upon Malt: a reduction which would promote morality, and give a stimulus to industry.

Mr. *Harvey* thought, that these propositions were suggested only by selfishness or some wretched theories. Let the Government only allow hon. Members to express their opinions, and it would find strength in the diversity of their opinions. They were now called upon to repeal the Malt-duties—in a day or two they were to be asked to repeal the Assessed-taxes: would the noble Lord who proposed it support a commutation of taxes, supposing the Government were to meet the demand for the repeal by such a plan? He was afraid the noble Lord would be found in the minority. It would be curious and instructive to learn how the hon. Members would give their votes on such a plan. He should like to know how many of the minority of ninety who went out just now on the proposition to give relief to the agriculturists voted the other evening in favour of the Motion for a Property-tax. It was all very well in hon. Member's pressing the Government to recede from its engagements; but he trusted Gentlemen would take the financial situation of the country into consideration before pressing for relief. He thought that they might possibly reduce 2,000,000*l.* or 3,000,000*l.*, and that such a sum might, by great exertions, be spared out of the 17,000,000*l.* or 18,000,000*l.* Government had to spend. That was, however, only to be done by the most searching economy. He conceived that it was possible that 3,000,000*l.*, but not more, could be spared and keep up the establishments and preserve the integrity of the country; but how was that to be done if 3,000,000*l.* were to be taken off for this tax, and 4,000,000*l.* for that?—if one day the Malt-tax was to be reduced, and another the Assessed-taxes were to be taken off, making together 7,000,000*l.*? The Malt-tax amounted to 4,800,000*l.* [*We only want the half taken off*] He would come to that presently; but assuming that the agriculturists demanded the whole, and the shopkeepers, as the inhabitants of the towns had been called by an hon. Member, required 2,500,000*l.* to be removed; here were upwards of 7,000,000*l.* which the Government was required to reduce. Those Gentlemen who proposed this, had not shown how the noble Lord was to get out of this financial difficulty. The hon. member for Worcester had brought forward a Motion for imposing a Property-tax in a manner which would not allow that Motion soon to be forgotten, and that Motion was partly opposed because it was anticipating the Budget. They were asked to wait—told calmly to resign themselves to confidence in the Ministry, and see what a reformer, as Chancellor of the Exchequer would produce. The Estimates amounted to 18,000,000*l.*; and what would be left to the Chancellor of the Exchequer if these demands were granted without some substitute? As a Reformed Parliament they were no longer the servants, but the masters of the Ministers; and he must blame the Members for taking the law entirely from them. It was their duty to refuse the Exchequer what they thought right; not to take every thing from the Government. Let them take upon themselves that responsibility which, as a duty and a right, belonged to them, and let them say what duty should be repealed and what imposed. He wished that some hon. Member would, in that sense, move a Resolution, stating that the country required primarily a reduction of taxation to the amount of 3,000,000*l.*; that would be a substantive proposition; and next he wished to have a Motion that the Malt-tax and the Assessed-taxes ought to be taken off, and their place supplied by a Property-tax. This would be an intelligible proposition, and would put to the test the sincerity of hon. Members. A repeal of the Malt-duties would be of advantage principally, if not exclusively, to the landlords. This, he thought, was pretty plain, even upon the argument of the hon. Baronet, the member for Hertford, who stated that the abolition would not reduce rents. Now, if a landlord required more rent because his tenants had to pay less tithes, surely the landlord would with equal readiness increase his rent when the duty on barley was diminished. Did hon. Members mean to say, that a landlord having a farm to let at Michaelmas would demand the same rent for it whether there was a high duty on Malt or none at all? He should vote for repealing not only half of the duty on malt but the whole of it; and he was prepared to vote for the substitution of a Property-tax to the extent that the exigences of the country might require. He agreed with the hon. Baronet the member for Warwickshire that the Government had fallen in the estimation of the country, that they had lost much of their popularity, and much of public confidence; and that they were reduced from that high and proud pinnacle on which they once stood, to become objects of great distrust and suspicion. He wished that the Ministers had proposed some definite plan for the imposition of a Property-tax; and then, if it had failed, the blame of the failure could not have rested with them, and they would at once have restored themselves to popularity, and would have silenced such remarks as those which had been made upon them this evening.

Lord *Althorp* said, that whatever might be the state of public opinion, and notwithstanding what had been said by his hon. friend, the member for Warwick, he must assert that he had openly and fairly stated to the House and the country the state of the finances, and he explained, as clearly as his abilities allowed him to do, how utterly impossible it was, consistent with the necessary expenses of the country, to consent to the proposed reductions without a commutation for other taxes. If then it was determined to reduce these taxes, and if the House were of opinion that a Property-tax was more advantageous it was for them to say so; but for his own part, whatever he might think of the principle of a Property-tax, he confessed that his abilities did not enable him to see through a practicable mode of an impartial and equal distribution of such a tax. There were two modes suggested of levying a Property-tax. One he understood to be a tax which would include all realized income, and he believed the hon. member for Colchester did not mean to include what he called professional income. Now the advocate of such a measure would scarcely contend that it would be a relief to the landed interests, who were said by some to be the principal sufferers. But he did not make use of that as any argument against it, nor did he then offer any argument against an equitable Property-tax; but, having considered the question attentively, he was bound to confess to the House that the difficulties which presented themselves were so great that he could not, as he said before, see his way to the formation of any plan for giving practical effect to an equitable distribution of such a tax. The next plan was one which would include a tax upon income; and he believed that no person having a recollection of the Property-tax of 1816 would be inclined to support such a measure. True it was, there was great objection to some of the existing taxes, but they were somewhat like the Poor-laws in some respects, very objectionable. But of all those who objected to the Poor-laws—and he admitted the validity of many of the objections—he had not met with any arranged plan that could at once be taken as a substitute for the Poor-laws; and it was also to be recollected that those who proposed such large reductions of taxes did not appear to be prepared or willing to propose a substitute for them. If such a system could be prepared with regard to the Property-tax, so as to be perfectly fair and equitable, he should be happy to adopt it. The hon. Member for Warwickshire said, that the Government had lost the confidence of the country by their vacillation. The hon. Member had not, however, pointed out any one instance of that vacillation. He was aware that they had sometimes been accused of obstinacy in carrying forward their measures, but he did not know that they had been accused of vacillation. If it was true that the Government had lost the confidence of the country, he did not believe that they had lost it on that account. The hon. Member who introduced this Motion proposed that half of the Malt-tax should be taken off. As far as the inconvenience to the Government was concerned, the whole might as well be reduced as a part, for in both cases it would be equally impossible to carry on the public service. The whole of the anticipated surplus income would be swallowed up; and if it were twice what it was, it would not be sufficient to meet the loss to the revenue which the adoption of this Motion would occasion. It was said, that no advantage had been given to the agriculturist. He denied the assertion. The tax on beer had been taken off, and the reduction of that was a great advantage to the barley grower, as it had most materially increased the consumption of the article he produced. As a proof of this, he need only refer to the number of bushels of malt consumed in the course of three successive years, and to the enormous increase of the amount of that consumption. In 1830, the number of bushels of malt consumed was 28,844,892

In 1831, there were 35,160,000 bushels of malt consumed; and in 1832, the number reached as high as 40,344,000 bushels. If this Motion was carried, it was impossible that he should effect the reductions of taxation which he had already suggested to the House, unless there was proposed some plan of a Property-tax such as the House could and would adopt. For these reasons he felt it to be absolutely necessary to oppose the Motion. It was objected to Ministers, and he admitted that it was a fair argument for some hon. Members to use, that they (the Ministers), when on the Opposition side of the House, had called for the substitution of other taxes for those which they proposed to be reduced. Now, whilst he admitted the fairness of this argument, he hoped it would not be considered unfair in him to admit frankly that he had not ability enough to discover a substitution for the taxes which were proposed to be reduced. He made that acknowledgment upon a full consideration of the difficulties that had presented themselves, and the House would consider him as acting fairly when he made this candid declaration. In his consideration of the subject he had, of course, kept in view the exigences of the country, and the necessity of maintaining the public honour and public credit. The meeting which took place yesterday had been referred to as a proof of the evils of giving Representatives to the Metropolitan Boroughs, and they were told that they had been forewarned of the enormous and overwhelming power they were creating when they proposed to give them Representatives. His answer was, that in whatever he had done he had endeavoured to act with perfect impartiality. His not having done more for the metropolis than he had done in the Budget, had, he found, rendered his propositions unpopular in this great city; and his not having done more for the agriculturists, would, he was also told, render them unpopular in the country. He regretted the consequence in both cases; but such was the fate of all men who took every possible care to do that which was fair for all parts of the empire alike. However the hon. member for Warwickshire might charge him with vacillation, he should not be found vacillating now. It was his determination, as long as he held the situation which he at present occupied, to endeavour to act fairly between all the different interests of the country, notwithstanding he might subject himself by so doing to the reproach that he did not act as some particular interests in the country might wish.

Mr. *Cobbett* said, that before he offered any remarks upon the Motion immediately before the House, he must make an observation or two respecting the Corn Laws, in consequence of what had fallen from some hon. Members. He remembered the history well of the Corn-Bill which had been so much attacked. He had disapproved of that Bill, not because it was a piece of gross injustice, or because it was in itself opprobrious, but because it was calculated to lead the landlords to support the Ministers in their extravagance. The hon. member for South Wilts (Mr. Benett) had, he believed, at the time the Bill was under consideration presided at a meeting at Salisbury held for the purpose of determining to keep up the prices. Now, that was an error, and an injury to the landlords themselves, as he then well saw, for it produced the enormous establishments they all so much complained of. The effect had been, that the whole country, with very few exceptions, accused the landlords of calling for the Corn-laws to enable them to rob the other classes of the community. He had addressed, in the course of last year, nearly half a million of persons, and all, or almost all, thought that the Corn-laws had been passed to tax the people for the benefit of the landlords—that the laws were, in fact, a means for taking out of the pockets of the people a large sum of money to put it into the pockets of the landlords; and that, therefore, they were most unjust. He had endeavoured, and he believed he had endeavoured successfully, every where to show them, that that was an injustice towards the landlords. He believed that the landlords would be glad to get rid of these laws. The Corn-laws were represented to be something new. Why there had been Corn-laws in England since the time of Edward 3rd., and no one thought then, or long afterwards, to talk of the tax on foreign corn as unjust. It was believed to be for the good of the country. Then there was the American Government. Nobody would suppose that that Government would levy a tax to benefit a particular class at the expense of all the rest of the people. Yet there had been a tax on corn in the United

States from the first moment of the Federal Government till the year 1824—a tax of twenty cents upon the bushel of wheat, Winchester measure, and a tax of ten cents upon the bushel of oats, of Winchester measure. His constituents had desired his colleague and himself to pledge themselves to vote against the Corn-laws, and they had distinctly told the people, that they would not do so, unless some of the burthens were removed from the land. They would only give the pledge upon that condition. The hon. and respectable, and, he might add, the venerable member for Hertfordshire, had favoured them with his opinions on this question, and had said that he should oppose the Motion, although he represented a county where more barley was made into malt than in any other county. To be sure he would; but then Hertfordshire was no more concerned in it than Lancashire; for though the barley was malted in Hertfordshire, the beer made from it was drunk in Lancashire. The respectable member for Hertfordshire had said, that the outcry against the Window-tax was most mistaken, for that the landlords, not the tenants, paid the Window-tax. He might as well say, that the landlords paid the Probate Duty on the wills of their tenants when they died. If that were so, then the landlords paid the Malt-tax too. Faith, then, we were in error indeed, and when the chopsticks complained of the high price of the beer they were drinking, the boy who served it could say, "Oh, you are wrong, the landlords pay the tax and not you." That was going so near the verge of absurdity, that it might be said to be absurdity, even in the presence of the hon. person for whose age one had so great a respect. He had for years past prayed to the Lord to soften the hearts of the Ministers, and induce them to take off the Malt-tax. He had for years together endeavoured to get them to take off the Salt-tax, and in that he had been successful. Now, if the noble Lord would take off the Malt-tax, he would consent to a compromise with the noble Lord, but he must take it all off, for half of it would be of no service. It was a most vexatious tax. The hon. member for Lincolnshire had told them truly, that in his county the price of the barley amounted to less than the duty paid on converting it into Malt. Suppose the barley was 20*s.* a quarter, as it was in Norfolk the other day, the duty was 20*s.* 8*d.*, that made the quarter of malt 40*s.* 8*d.*, but the malt was selling for 60*s.* a quarter. There was the injury to the people. That it was which made this tax an object of universal dislike, and that it was which should make the noble Lord take off this tax in preference to others. What then became of the 19*s.* 4*d.*? Oh, it was said, the maltster had it. No such thing. The maltster had part of it, it was true, but the vexatious and disgraceful system he was subjected to ate up the far greater part. A maltster could not pursue his trade as he liked. He could not wet his malt when he pleased; he could not let it stop in the cistern as long as he pleased; he could not carry it to the couch when he pleased; in fact, he could do no one thing in his business but under the spy and inspection of an excise officer. The extent of their inconvenience was dreadful. At Kingston the other day he saw a crowd, and he was told twenty or thirty maltsters were up to be fined 100*l.* a-piece for using a watering-pot to wet their barley. He had always said, that the English Excise was worse than the Spanish Inquisition; and he was sure, that if all the victims of the Exchequer, for the last ten years, were assembled in Palace-yard (if indeed Palace-yard would hold them), the sight of them would absolutely frighten the House. And into whose hands was this inspection of the maltsters committed? Why, into those of the excisemen. They were not the elect of the earth. They were, in fact, rude, saucy, overbearing, jacks in office. He did not blame Ministers, but the system. It took from the people 13,000,000*l.* a-year, and he did not believe that the Treasury received 15*s.* a quarter for the malt made. But that was not the only evil. It induced immorality and abasement of character. Young people were driven from the farm-houses to beer-houses, and the consequence was ruin. He remembered that, a few years ago, at his farm at Barn Elms, his men and boys cost him more for beer than for every thing else put together; and he had been repeatedly told by intelligent farmers, that they sent their men from their houses in consequence of the cost of giving them beer at home. Fifty years ago there was a very different system. Then young men lived in the farm-houses until they married; and they were not in a hurry to marry, for they had good homes and comforts. The master and mistress then took care of them—saw that they kept good hours, were regular, attended church; and the consequence was, that they were happy and their employers were benefited. Now, however, they were driven to the beer-house; and if a spy police were established in every parish, it would do no good, for police and all would go to the beer-shop and get drunk together. The only way to remedy the evil was to repeal this the worst of taxes. The hon. Member referred to the evidence given before the Agricultural Committee in 1821, to show that the state of the agricultural labourer had been greatly altered for the worse within the last fifty years. Fifty years ago every farmer made his own malt. He had advised people to use their own ovens for that purpose, but it would be better if there might be a small kiln in every parish. A great many books had appeared lately from a society which had a great functionary at its head, and which called itself the "Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge." These books all recommended to the people to use spare diet. Spare diet, to be sure! The people of England did not require to be told by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge to use spare diet. Their necessities forced them to it. He would tell them what ought to be done; throw all the Useful Knowledge books into the fire, and give them pots of beer. The people had grown much poorer within the last few years; he recollected when he used to see crowds of healthy and strong agricultural labourers in the country churches, each dressed in his clean smock-frock, and looking happy and contented. How was it now? There was hardly one to be seen in the churches; or, if there happened to be a few there, they were sure to be found poor and miserable, and without even clean frocks on their backs, a change that was produced by the Malt-tax. He did not consider the proposition made exactly what was required, or according to his own conviction of what was right. Yet he would not oppose the Motion of the hon. Baronet. It was true, the hon. Baronet only proposed to take one-half off the Malt-tax. That would give neither satisfaction nor the necessary relief. If they were only to take 10*s*. off, the duty and the price of the quarter of malt would still be 50*s*.; but let them take 20*s*. off, and the price would be only 20*s*. per quarter. The hon. Baronet had said, that the Government could not spare so much. He did not know where the hon. Baronet got his information; but it was incorrect. He (Mr. Cobbett) was not in the secrets of the Ministers, but he could tell the hon. Baronet, that they could spare the whole duty; and that they would do just as well without it as they did now that they had it, if the House chose to take it from them. He did not think, that if the Motion of the hon. Baronet were agreed to, the maltster would take 5*s*. off the price of the quarter of malt, and therefore if the hon. Baronet would agree to alter it, and propose to take the whole duty off malt, he should have his hearty support. If, however, the Motion of the hon. Baronet were carried as it now stood, he pledged himself on some future day to move for the repeal of the remainder.

Mr. *Curteis* called on the Members for all large towns to join the agriculturists in supporting the Motion of the hon. Baronet. He considered the Motion of the utmost consequence to the agricultural labourer. It was of greater consequence to the tenants than to the landlord. He hoped, that the Motion would be carried, or at all events, that there would be such a respectable minority as would show that the feeling of the whole country was opposed to the tax. Though he always supported Ministers when he thought them in the right, he had no hesitation in opposing them when wrong; he would accordingly oppose them on the present question. He hoped that the hon. Baronet would press his Motion to a division.

Mr. *Mark Philips* said, feeling, as the representative of a great manufacturing and commercial community, that he had been called upon by the hon. member for Sussex, to support the present Motion, he begged to assure the hon. Gentleman, that he for one needed no such appeal. He was ready as a volunteer to have supported the Motion, having long, in his own mind, been convinced of the propriety of abolishing the duty on malt; and he begged to assure the hon. member for Lincolnshire, who had that night brought forward the Motion, that all he had to complain of was, that his measure did not go far enough. He knew that the character of the hon. Baronet would clear him from the imputation of being ordinarily the supporter of half measures; but in this instance he was ready to have supported him in the total repeal of the Malt-duty.

He did not consider, that in voting for the repeal of this duty he could be accused of any, the most remote, desire to create embarrassment, or to hazard the public credit. He had far too great a regard for his country's credit, and for commercial credit, which was so intimately allied with it, ever by any act of his, or by any vote which he had given, or ever would give, in that House, to endanger the public faith. It appeared to him, that a Property-tax offered a ready and practicable means of commutation for this and other taxes; and he supported the Motion because he considered that it would afford substantial relief to the manufacturing as well as to the agricultural population of the country. The two interests—the manufacturing and the agricultural—were inseparably connected; the one could not flourish without the other; and it was impossible that the one could flourish at the expense of the other. He was anxious to see a cheap, a good, and wholesome beverage, placed within the reach of the labouring classes, whether of the manufacturing or the agricultural community. He looked at the moral effects of the repeal of the Malt-tax. He wished to afford a substantial check to the dreadful effects of that consumption of ardent spirits which prevailed in our great manufacturing towns. He wished to see the use of beer extended—not in the beer-shops, but at the domestic meal. The hon. member for Lincolnshire had alluded to the alteration which had taken place of late years in the mode of life on the part of the agricultural labourer, in his now being no longer, to the same extent as formerly, the inmate of the farmer's dwelling. He should not occupy the attention of the House by entering upon this topic, but it was, in his humble opinion, matter for serious consideration. As a representative of a large mercantile constituency, therefore, and well knowing their wishes, he could declare that they were most anxious for the repeal of the Malt-tax, not merely on account of the relief which would thereby be afforded to themselves, but, at the same time, as an act of justice to the agriculturists.

Mr. *Robert Palmer* had voted that evening for the Motion of the noble Marquess below him, and would also vote for the proposition of the hon. Baronet, because he conceived both to be brought forward in a spirit of justice to the agricultural interest. In neither instance could he, in justice, be obnoxious to the charge of being actuated by a desire to embarrass Ministers. He, at least, was one who would never vote for the reduction or repeal of any tax, merely because it might embarrass the Government of the time being. He looked only to the justice and policy of the measure, and not to its probable party consequences. He would never lend himself to the views by which the papers of that day represented the noble Lord (Althorp) opposite to have been influenced when sitting on the Opposition side of the House. The newspapers contained a statement which he could not for a moment believe, but which represented the noble Lord as having stated, in answer to a question of a Member of a deputation that had waited on him in reference to a repeal of the House and Window-taxes, that "It is very true, as you say, that I did vote for a repeal of those taxes; but I did so at the time merely to embarrass Ministers." Whether this was a correct statement, he could not, of course, take it upon him to affirm; but he would say it was an example he should never imitate. He would vote for a reduction of the duty on malt, because he was convinced that no tax bore so heavily upon the working classes. The rich had their wines and luxuries, but malt beverage was the only drink of the poor labourer; to reduce it, therefore, would be an essential benefit to that large and important class of the community. He, of course, could not expect that, if a tax so productive were reduced one-half, the noble Lord should not endeavour to make good the revenue deficiency by some other less obnoxious impost. All that he hoped for was, that the noble Lord would undertake the bold experiment of reducing this oppressive tax, substituting in its stead one less burthensome to the working classes.

Lord *Althorp* felt himself called upon to offer one or two words of explanation in reference to the newspaper statement to which the hon. Gentleman had just alluded. The hon. Gentleman did him but justice in disbelieving that statement. He never said what was attributed to him. He was asked, in a (to say the least) very unusual manner, to repeal certain taxes. On his declining, he was reminded that he had on a former occasion, when out of office, voted for the repeal of the same taxes. His answer was, a statement of the grounds on which he had voted on the occasion alluded to. He told his questioners that he had voted for a repeal of the House and Window-tax, and other taxes, because he thought the expenditure of the country unnecessarily, and therefore unjustifiably, excessive; and he voted for a repeal of taxes in order to compel the then Government to lessen the expenditure. But he particularly stated that he thought this reduction of expenditure the more called for and practicable because there was a comparatively large surplus of income over expenditure in the Exchequer at the time, he ever having held the opinion that no such surplus was desirable for the purposes of which it was the pretext. But no such state of things obtained now: the present Administration had cut down the expenditure to the utmost in their power, and they had no surplus fund. These important circumstances, therefore, being now so different, he told the meeting that he had not the same motive for a repeal of those taxes as when he had sat on the Opposition side of the House. And that was what he said, and no more.

Mr. *Barron* said, that he should oppose the present Motion with great reluctance; because, being a landed proprietor, he should, of course, be very much benefited by the reduction of the Malt-duty. He could not, however, vote for the Motion, because he did not see how it was possible to reduce the establishment to the amount of 2,500,000*l.*

Captain *Gordon* did expect that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have included in his Budget some proposition to relieve the agricultural classes. The reduction of taxation on taxed carts and tiles would not be felt in the particular part of the country with which he was connected, because neither taxed carts nor tiles were used there. He felt bound in justice to his constituents to vote for a Motion which would have the effect of giving some small relief. He supported it, however, for another reason, namely, that there was every reason to suppose a reduction of the duty would increase the consumption, and thus remove the objection made by many hon. Members that it was necessary for the support of the revenue.

Mr. *O'Connell* would support the Motion, simply because it was a Motion for reduction of taxation. It was the duty of the House to reduce taxation, and the only way to compel the Ministers to reduce the establishments of the country was, to take from the resources of expenditure. His own opinion, however, was, that the reduction of the Malt Duty by one-half would, by augmenting the consumption, have the effect of increasing the revenue. The noble Lord said, that he had made no statement to the effect that he voted for reduction of taxation to embarrass the Government. He could assure the noble Lord, that the impression on the minds of a great number of the deputation was, that he had so expressed himself. There could be no doubt, however, that after the noble Lord's explanation, that impression was erroneous.

Mr. *Hume* was convinced that the reduction of the Malt-duty one-half would not have the effect of diminishing the revenue to that amount. When the duty on spirits and coffee was reduced, the consumption greatly increased, and the revenue, instead of suffering, was benefited. He was sure, that if the present Motion was agreed to, the deficit would not exceed 800,000*l.* or 900,000*l.*; and he thought the Ministers might manage to go on very well, notwithstanding that deficiency. But if it was necessary to retain the present amount of taxation, he would, rather than keep the tax on malt, have a duty to the same amount placed on spirits.

Mr. *Lloyd* said, that, although representing an exclusively manufacturing constituency, he felt called upon, in justice to the agricultural population, to vote for the Motion. In doing so, however, he expressed a hope that, whenever a Motion were made, by which the burthens of the manufacturing population might be relieved, the agricultural Members, recollecting the support they were that night receiving, would unite their efforts in having it carried.

Mr. *Hodges* said that, knowing what were the feelings of the country on the subject of this tax, he felt it his duty to support the Motion of the hon. Baronet, the member for Lincolnshire; at the same time he expressed his regret that that Motion did not go to the extent of the entire abolition of the Malt-tax. While on his legs, he could not help observing, that it appeared to him rather a curious circumstance to see those Gentlemen who had supported every Administration that existed previous to the present one, now demanding a remission of taxation. In his opinion it would have been much better if they had not, years and years ago, lent their aid in the imposition of those taxes, of which they now so much complained. He did not, however, quarrel with them for now demanding a reduction of taxation, and the Ministers could not do better than take them at their word, and regulate the future establishments of the country more in conformity with the means of the people.

Mr. *Baring* said, that as the noble Lord (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) had declared that it was not expedient to maintain a surplus revenue for the purpose of liquidating the debt, and as that sentiment had been re-echoed from all sides of the House, it became a question for him to consider, when the whole surplus revenue was applied to the reduction of taxation, what parties were entitled to share in the scramble. He should certainly not be doing his duty towards his constituents, standing there the representative of a county purely agricultural, if he did not vote for the Motion of the hon. Baronet (Sir W. Ingilby). The agricultural interest was at that moment suffering under peculiar distress, and it was their duty to give relief where relief was most required. For this consideration, as well as in discharge of the duty he owed to his constituents, he should support the present Motion. He believed, too, that no reduction of taxation was more likely to give relief than the reduction of the duty on malt. If, however, the tax could not be spared, it might easily be transferred to some other article. He was one of those who thought the Beer Bill required consideration. The Committee appointed to inquire into that subject had received numerous representations of the pernicious consequences of the establishment of beer-shops; and it might be worthy of consideration, whether or not the transfer of part of the duty on malt to beer would not have the effect of removing those inconveniences which had been experienced from the operation of the Beer Bill.

Lord *John Russell* rose amidst loud cries of "question." He certainly would not have trespassed on the attention of the House, had it not been for the surprise which he felt at the extraordinary speech which had just been delivered. It was a common but just observation, that new proselytes always went to extremes; but that any man should go from so great an extreme one way, to so great an extreme the other, was indeed calculated to excite some astonishment. For several years past, he had heard the hon. member for Essex declare, as indeed he did some nights ago, that the only means of saving this country was by keeping up a large sinking fund, to which not less than 5,000,000*l*. per annum should be appropriated. His noble friend, taking another course of policy, said, "Let us not burthen the people for a sinking fund, but let us avoid the difficulties resulting from a deficit, and keep up a surplus of revenue beyond expenditure of a million or less." But what said the hon. member for Essex—did he say, "keep up the taxes—retain a sufficient surplus?" Oh, no; he said, "if I cannot have a surplus of 5,000,000*l*., let me have a deficit." According to the statement of his noble friend on the Budget, there would be a surplus of 1,500,000*l*. His noble friend proposed to take off rather more than 1,000,000*l*., but the hon. member for Lincolnshire, in proposing to take off half the Malt-tax, asked for a reduction to the amount of 2,400,000*l*. This was the proposition which the hon. member for Essex—the great patron and supporter of the Sinking Fund—thought it consistent with his line of policy to adopt. That hon. Gentleman had told them, when the Motion of the hon. member for Whitehaven came on for discussion, that he had received many letters from his constituency, but the effect which this produced on his mind was only to prove that they were grossly ignorant; but on the present occasion, he had thrown aside all previous notions—he had cast away all the conclusions of his enlightened mind, and had condescended to become the representative of the worst and most besotted ignorance. To enter on the financial year with the deficiency of one million, was what, he hoped, no Minister of this great nation would ever consent to, and what no House of Commons would ever sanction. The necessary consequence of such a proceeding would be, to make the faith of the country suspected at home—to diminish its reputation abroad—and to place us in such a situation as would necessarily deprive us of that high and noble station which we had hitherto held among the nations of the world. Those who thought the establishments of the country might be sufficiently reduced to meet the deficiency would be perfectly consistent in voting for the Resolution of the hon. member for Lincolnshire. It was, however, equally consistent for him, as one of those who brought forward the financial statement for the year—and who had proved by acts, and not by words, their desire of conducting the Government, of the country in the full spirit of economy—to say, that he thought it impossible to make so large a reduction in our establishments as would enable us to meet the deficiency which would be occasioned by passing this Resolution. There was certainly one other method which had been stated most fairly—he might say with his usual fairness—by the hon. member for Colchester, namely, that this, with some other taxes, might be altogether reduced, and a tax upon income or property substituted. He admitted, that it was the duty of that House, after having provided for the national faith and interests, to consider what ways and means of raising the necessary taxation would prove least burthensome to the people. If the House considered such means less burthensome than those which at present existed, it was of course their duty to adopt that suggestion. Certainly, if the whole question of taxation were now to be raised for the first time, he said he was inclined to favour the sentiments promulgated in a most able speech of the late Mr. Huskisson, in 1830. But, in his opinion, if they were now to enter into such a commutation he firmly believed that the hopes of the House would be disappointed, and that the discontent and irritation which would ensue upon the imposition of a tax which experience had proved so obnoxious, would preponderate over the satisfaction to which it might give rise. Upon the whole, then, he would leave the question to the House, believing, fortified as he was by the vote of the other night, that the House would not on any account lend itself to a vote by which the national faith might be rendered liable to suspicion.

Mr. *Baring* explained. He had distinctly stated that, in voting for the Resolution of the hon. Baronet, he had by no means abandoned the principles which he had hitherto maintained with regard to the Sinking Fund. But as he found it impossible to convince Ministers of the propriety of adopting his sentiments, he had dealt with them according to their own principles.

Sir *Charles Burrell* said, he should vote for the hon. Baronet's Motion, but not with an expectation that it would lead to any deficiency of the revenue; on the contrary, he believed that the increase of the consumption of malt would be equivalent to the amount of duty reduced.

The House divided on Sir W. Ingilby's Motion—Ayes 162: Noes 152: Majority 10.

Mr. *Robinson* then rose and said, as one of those who voted in the majority on this occasion, he thought it his duty to state that the vote he had given had not been dictated by any feeling of hostility towards his Majesty's Government. Gentlemen might smile, but he could honestly and conscientiously state, that such was not his intention. He was aware that the effect of such a decision must lead to some embarrassment on their part. He considered, however, that a most important principle had now been established, that the system of indirect taxation, in its present extent and degree, was at an end; and he called on the landed gentlemen who had insinuated that the Representatives of the trading and manufacturing towns entertained an unworthy jealousy towards that interest, but who had now received their support in the reduction of the Malt-duty, would be equally ready when, in a few days, the hon. Baronet, the member for the City of London, would propose a total repeal of the House and Window Duty, to lend their assistance for the abolition of these taxes. It would then, when that measure was also carried, be his duty—if the Government did not make a proposition to that effect—to submit a Motion for the adoption of some means to supply whatever deficiency might be necessary, after the enforcement of every practicable reduction in the public expenditure.

Lord *Althorp* said, that he was certain the intention of the hon. Mover of the Resolution was not to embarrass the Government, but to carry a measure of his own. Notwithstanding, he admitted that what had taken place that night would place his Majesty's Ministers in a state of considerable embarrassment; yet after the decision that the House had just come to, though the majority was not very large, he did not feel himself disposed to offer any further opposition on that occasion, to the hon. Baronet's Resolution.

The Resolution—"That the duty on Malt be reduced from 20*s.* 8*d.* to 10*s.* a quarter"—was put from the Chair, and carried.

List of the AYES.

Adams, E. H.
Aglionby, H. A.
Arbuthnot, Hon. H.
Astley, Sir J. D.
Attwood, T.
Balfour, J.
Bankes, W.
Baring, A.
Baring, H. B.
Barnard, E. G.
Beauclerk, Major A.
Bell, M.
Bellew, R. M.
Benett, John
Bernard, W. S.
Bethell, R.
Bish, T.
Blackstone, W. S.
Blamire, W.
Blandford, Marq. of
Bolling, W.
Bowes, J.
Brigstock, W. P.
Brodie, W. B.
Bruce, Lord E.
Burrell, Sir C. M.
Cayley, Sir G.
Cayley, E. S.
Chandos, Marquess of
Chaplin, T.
Clayton, W. R.
Cobbett, W.
Conolly, E. M.
Cookes, T. H.
Crawley, S.
Curteis, H. B.
Curteis, E. B.
Davies, T.
Dillwyn, L. W.
Dundas, J. W. D.
Etwall, R.
Faithfull, G.
Fancourt, C. S. J.
Feilden, W.
Fenton, J.
Fergusson, G.
Fielden, J.
Finn, W. F.
Fitzgerald, T.
Fitzsimon, C.
Fitzsimon, N.
Folkes, Sir W.
Fox, S. L.
Fryer, R.
Gaskell, D.
Gaskell, J. M.
Godson, R.
Gordon, Hon. W.
Gore, M.
Goring, H. D.
Guise, Sir W. B.
Gully, J.
Handley, H.
Handley, B.
Hanmer, Sir J.
Harvey, D. W.
Hay, Sir J.
Hay, A. L.
Heathcote, G. J.
Henniker, Lord
Herbert, Hon. S.
Hodges, T. L.
Hoskins, K.
Humphery, J.
Hutt, W.
Hughes, H.
Kerrison, Sir E.
King, E. B.
Knatchbull, Sir E.
Lalor, P.
Langdale, Hon. C.
Langton, Col. G.
Leech, J.
Lefevre, C. S.
Lennard, Sir T. B.
Lennard, T. B.
Lister, E. C.
Lloyd, J. H.
Locke, W.
Lopez, Sir R.
Mandeville, Visc.
Maxwell, J. W.
Maxwell, Sir J.
Methuen, P.
Milton, Visc.
O'Brien, C.
O'Connell, M.
O'Connell, D.
O'Connell, M.
O'Connell, C.
O'Dwyer, A. C.
Ossulston, Lord
Palmer, C. F.
Palmer, R.
Parker, J.
Parrott, J.
Pelham, C. A. W.
Philips, M.
Pigot, R.
Pinney, W.
Plumptre, J. P.
Poulter, J. S.
Price, R.
Rickford, W.
Rider, T.
Rippon, C.
Robarts, A. W.
Robinson, G. R.
Roe, J.
Romilly, J.
Rooper, J. B.
Russell, W. G.
Ruthven, E.
Sanford, E. A.
Scholefield, J.
Seale, J. H.
Sharpe, General
Shawe, R. N.
Simeon, Sir R. G.
Sinclair, G.
Spencer, Hon. F.
Spry, S. T.
Staunton, Sir G. T.
Stewart, J.
Sullivan, R.
Talbot, C. R.
Talbot, J.
Tancred, H. W.
Tayleure, W.
Taylor, M. A.
Tennyson, C.
Tooke, W.
Torrens, Colonel
Townshend, Lord C.
Trelawney, W. L. S.
Troubridge, Sir E.
Turner, W.
Tynte, C. K.
Tyrell, C.
Tyrell, Sir J.
Verner, W.
Vigors, N. A.
Walter, J.
Wason, R.
Welby, G. E.
Weyland, Major R.
Williams, G.
Wilmot, Sir E.
Windham, W. H.
Wrottesley, Sir J. B.
Yelverton, Hon. W.
Young, F.

TELLERS.

Hume, J.
Ingilby, Sir W.

PAIRED OFF.

Hall, Mr.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, April 29, 1833.

MINUTES.] Petitions presented. By the Earl of SHAFTESBURY, from Worcester; and the Earl of MORLEY, from Plymouth,—for the Repeal of the Assessed Taxes.—By the Duke of GRAFTON, from Suffolk, for an Alteration in the Sale of Beer Act.—By Lord LYNDHURST, from Beverley, against a Clause in the Local Jurisdiction Bill.—By the Bishops of HEREFORD, and Exeter, the Duke of CLEVELAND, the Marquess of STAFFORD, the Earls of CADOGAN, FITZWILLIAM, and RADNOR, and Lords SUFFIELD, POLTIMORE, and WESTERN, from a very great Number of Places,—against Slavery.—By the Archbishop of CANTERBURY, the Marquess of STAFFORD, and the Earls of ROSSLYN, RODEN, and RADNOR, from a Number of Places,—for a Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By the Marquess of STAFFORD, from Edderton, for an Alteration in the existing System of Church Patronage in Scotland.—By the Earl of ABERDEEN, from the Royal College of Physicians (Edinburgh), for an Alteration in the Apothecaries Act.—By the Earl of RADNOR, from Northiam, Sussex, for a Commutation of Tithes.—By a NOBLE LORD, from Belfast, for Poor Laws to Ireland.—By the Earl of RODEN, from a Parish in Cork, against the proposed Measure of Church Reform (Ireland).—By Lord WESTERN, from the Eastern Division of the County of Kent, for the Repeal of the Malt Duty.

TITHES (ENGLAND).] Lord *Suffield* presented a petition from Uttoxeter, praying for an alteration in the Tithe System. The petitioners complained grievously that tithes were levied in the most inconvenient possible manner, and that these funds, which were originally destined to promote the moral and religious instruction of the parishioners, were entirely perverted from such objects. The inhabitants of Uttoxeter amounted to 5,000, and the tithes were worth 1,300*l.* a-year. The impropriators, the Dean and Chapter of Windsor, let them out to a Mr. Charles

Tyrrell, of Suffolk, who sublet them to various individuals, who made all they could of them by exacting every farthing possible on every improvement made in the lands, a system which either took from the enterprising tenant the reward of his industry, or checked industry altogether. The Dean and Chapter of Windsor had a vicar at the stipend of 20*l.* per annum, to which must be added the small tithes, most troublesome and vexatious in their collection, making about 150*l.* more. The vicar hired a curate at the rate of 50*l.* a-year, and the petitioners complained that these clergymen, notwithstanding the large sum paid as tithes, were destitute of the means of administering consolation to the poor, and of performing their duties properly. The petitioners earnestly prayed that these, and all such grievances throughout the kingdom, might be done away with.

The Earl of *Eldon* deprecated the system which appeared to have been entered into of making this sort of petitions a peg whereon to hang attacks on the clergy; the persons petitioned against most generally knew nothing about the intended attack, and were therefore unable to forward any refutations of them. Such petitions, however, would have not the slightest operation in altering his fixed determination to support the Established Church. There was a measure to be brought forward with reference to Church Reform, and he hoped that the debate on the subject would not be forestalled by the renewal of any such assertions as these. Besides, particular instances of individual conduct constituted no general rule by which their Lordships could form their judgment.

Lord *Suffield* protested against the noble Earl's interpretation of what he had done; he had merely read the statement of certain petitioners; and however unimportant the petitions and complaints of the people might appear to the noble Earl, he should never hesitate in bringing them before the House. He denied having brought this petition forward by surprise; he had given full intimation of it to the parties concerned, and had given notice to their Lordships of his intention.

The Bishop of *Bristol* said, that the noble Earl (Suffield) had certainly given him information that he intended to present the petition. He had accordingly sent to the Dean and Chapter of Windsor, one of the leading members of which returned an answer which clearly showed that the *ex-parte* statement of the petitioners was greatly exaggerated; indeed, the whole was a misrepresentation. So far from having the large income stated in the petition, the whole amount obtained by the Dean and Chapter was 27*l.* a-year; and they had, out of this insignificant sum, paid 200*l.* towards rebuilding the church, and several other sums, towards charities, &c. As to the pay of the ministers, it did not wholly depend upon the holders of large tithes, nor had the diocesan any power to augment the stipend. It was, however, in contemplation to augment the benefice, but this could not be done before the renewal of the lease.

The Earl of *Radnor* said, the noble and learned Lord (the Earl of Eldon) seemed to fall into the offence of prediscussion much more than the noble Lord whom he objurgated. As to the petitioners, he thought they ought to be pretty well acquainted with the extent of what they paid.

Petition laid on the Table.

JURIES (IRELAND).] On the Motion of Viscount Melbourne, the Order of the Day was read for the resuming of the debate on the third reading of this Bill. The noble Viscount and the Duke of Wellington each proposed several verbal Amendments, all of which were agreed to without discussion.

Bill read a third time.

On the Motion that it do pass,

The Earl of *Longford* said, at that late period, he would not go into any discussion on the measure before their Lordships, which he considered singularly ill-timed. He could not understand how that measure could be reconciled with the coercive measure which the Ministers thought necessary for Ireland. It was very strange that such a measure as the present should be brought forward at a time when it was acknowledged that justice could not be administered in the ordinary way in Ireland. The body of Jurymen in that country consisted of two classes—those who were willing to act uprightly, and those who were devoted to the interests of others. The present Bill favoured the introduction of the latter class into the Jury box. He thought that the Bill was not wanted, and that, at all events, it should be postponed until it had a fair opportunity of being reconsidered.

Lord *Carbery* agreed with the opinion of his noble friend who had last spoken, and said, that a large body of the most eminent persons at the Irish bar were opposed to the present measure.

The Marquess of *Westmeath* complained that the measure did not grow out of the judicial inquiry lately instituted, but was only a fifteenth part of it, since that inquiry embraced fourteen other important subjects. He was of opinion that the sub-sheriffs should not interfere in the formation of Jury lists.

Lord *Cloncurry* contended, that the present measure would put back into the hands of the Sheriffs a power with which they ought not to be invested. He remembered that, in one county, Kildare—out of six Sheriffs five had been insolvent, and therefore he considered that they were improper persons to have the power of returning Juries. He had seen one Sheriff hunted about by the Coroner for the debts of his court; and such, he was sorry to say, was the general character of the persons who had of late years filled the office of Sheriff in Ireland. They were the only persons who ought not to select Jurors, the best way of choosing whom would be according to a property qualification.

The Earl of *Roden* said, that if there was anything good in Irish Jurisprudence, it was the system of Juries. Irish Jurors were honest men, and anxious to assist in the fair administration of justice. In some instances, rather than do violence to their consciences, they had staid away, and, by so doing, subjected themselves to large fines. The present measure excluded from the Jury lists a respectable body of persons—he meant the parish clerks. He wanted to know from the noble Viscount opposite, why they were excluded, and whether it was from the circumstance of their being Protestants? He thought the measure proposed by his Majesty's Ministers unnecessary and uncalled for; and as he had opposed it in its former stages, he would continue his opposition to the last, and vote against the Motion that it do pass.

Viscount *Melbourne* said, that with respect to the general objections made to the Bill, he had already explained himself so fully, that he trusted their Lordships would not take it as a mark of disrespect if he made no further explanations on those objections. With respect to the clause complained of by the noble Earl who had just sat down, he would merely state that it was only meant to exempt parish clerks from the discharge of an additional and an onerous duty. He was not certain whether, as the law then stood, parish clerks could serve or not; but he knew that what was intended by the introduction of the clause objected to was, to relieve them from what they would themselves consider a heavy buthen.

The Bill passed.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, April 29, 1833.

MINUTES.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of Mr. VIGORS, an Account of the Annual Receipts and Expenditure in the Parish of St. Pancras, Middlesex, for the last three years.—On the Motion of Mr. RICARDO, an Account of the Management and Expenses of the different Gaols in England and Wales.—On the Motion of Mr. SPRING RICE, an Account of the Amount of all the Taxes Repealed or Imposed in each year, since the close of the War.

Petitions presented By Sir JOHN HOBHOUSE, from several Metropolitan Parishes; by Mr. LANGSTON, from three Parishes at Oxford; and by Mr. EWART, from Liverpool,—for a Repeal of the Assessed Taxes.—By Colonel LYGON, from Worcester; Mr. COLQUHOUN, from two Places; and Mr. BRIGSTOCK, from Ubley, against the Repeal or Amendment of the Sale of Beer Act.—By Mr. EWART, from Liverpool, for Relief to the Dissenters with respect to Marriages, Parochial Rates, and Registrations.—By the same, from Medical Practitioners, Liverpool; and by Mr. BANNERMAN, from the University of Aberdeen,—for an Alteration in the Apothecaries Act.—By Mr. COLQUHOUN, from the Spirit Dealers of Kirkintillock, for a Repeal of the Tippling Act.—By the same, from the Hand-loom Weavers of Scotland; and by Mr. JAMES OSWALD, from Calton,—for a Board of Trade, and for Relief.—By Mr. SHAW, from a Number of Places in Ireland, against the Church Temporalities (Ireland) Bill.—By Mr. G. J. HEATHCOTE, from the Landowners of Kesteven (Lincoln), against any Alteration of the Corn Laws.—By Mr. BRIGSTOCK, Mr. HUTT, and Mr. VIGORS, from several Places, for a Repeal of the Assessed Taxes.—By Mr. PLUMPTRE, from two Places in Kent, for a Repeal of the Malt Duty.—By Mr. VIGORS, from the Parish of St Pancras, for a Repeal of the Septennial Act, and for Vote by Ballot.—By Mr. BANNERMAN, from Aberdeen, for a Repeal of the Duty on Stamped Receipts.—By Messrs. BOLTON KING, BARING, HENBAGE, MARJORIBANKS, J. SMITH, COLQUHOUN, FITZGERALD, F. SHAW, RICARDO, MORISON, HUTT, BRIGSTOCK, J. C. DUNDAS, and PLUMPTRE, Colonel LYGON, Sir J. DALRYMPLE, Sir W. FOLKES, and an HON. MEMBER, from a great Number of Places,—against Slavery: also by Alderman THOMPSON, Sir EDMUND HAYES, and Viscount APSLEY.—By Messrs. J. SMITH, COLQUHOUN, G. J. HEATHCOTE, SHAW, BRIGSTOCK, VIGORS, BANNERMAN, Colonel LYGON, Lord OSSULSTON, and an HON. MEMBER, from a Number of Places,—for a Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By Lord GRANVILLE SOMERSET, from Landogo, for some Modifications in the Sabbath Observance Bill.—By Mr. HODGES, from Cranbrook, and other Places in Kent, for a Repeal of the Malt Duty.—By Lord APSLEY, from the Clergy of the Deanery of Stow (Gloucester), against the Church Temporalities (Ireland) Bill; and for a Repeal of the Sale of Beer Act.—By Mr. BARING, from the Proprietors of Drury Lane and Covent Garden Theatres, against the Bill for Regulating Dramatic Performances.

BOROUGH OF LAUNCESTON.] Mr.

Charles Buller presented a petition from the electors of Launceston, in the county of Cornwall, complaining that bribery had been used at the last election for that borough, and that they were only prevented from proving it before the House, by the enormous expense which attended the taking of evidence before Election Committees. He must disclaim all feeling of personal hostility against the Gallant General (Sir Henry Hardinge), who had been the successful candidate for that borough. He was most unwilling also to give any pain to the noble Duke (Northumberland), who was said to nominate the hon. member for Launceston. His sole object was, to show that there existed what the petitioners considered a constitutional abuse. The first statement in the petition was highly deserving the attention of the House, that, in consequence of the great and enormous expense which was incurred by Election Committees, they could not prove the existence at the last election of the bribery which the petition alleged. The petition then went on to pray that the constituency might be increased by extending the limits of the borough. The petition also prayed that a Commission should be sent down to inquire into the existence of bribery at the last election, and that the evidence might be taken on the spot. The hon. Member, in supporting the prayer of the petition, stated, that he was aware he made himself obnoxious to those who advocated the "finality" of the Reform Bill; but he for one had never conceded the monstrous principle that any legislative measure was to be final; still less had he ever conceded the still more monstrous principle, that the Members of that House were entitled by any sort of compromise to barter away the rights and privileges of the people. The Reform Bill, he considered, would be a mere mockery to the people of England if it did not, to use the language of Lord Grey in the House of Lords, "put an end to the system of nomination," and introduce in its room that of representation. It was not, however, against the Reform Bill, but against the Boundary Bill, that he urged objection; and it surely would not be said that Lieut. Drummond's Bill was to be a final measure against the whole people. He wished the boundaries of the borough to be enlarged. He almost wished that no assertion had been made as to the existence of bribery, as he wished to confine the attention of the House to a single question of fact, whether Launceston was still a nomination borough? He regretted that the Vote by Ballot had not been carried on a late occasion, as he was of opinion that it would have given the voters some effectual protection. But, from the number of votes in favour of the ballot on that occasion, he did not think that the people of England would be long excluded from that benefit. He must press on the attention of the House the necessity of enlarging the extent of this very limited borough. He did not ask for the Commission solely on behalf of the electors of Launceston, but on behalf of the people of England generally, who were deeply interested in the system of representation, of the state of which the petition furnished some evidence.

Sir *Henry Hardinge* thought the speech of the hon. Member was not so much for the purpose of doubting the legality of the election, as it was to exhibit a desire to attack the Reform Bill. With regard to the Reform Bill, he (Sir H. Hardinge) had opposed it to the utmost; but as it was now the law of the land, he should do all he could to remedy any defect that it had. He did not, however, agree, that it was necessary on all occasions on which the petitioners might happen to be defeated, that they should claim a large extension of boundary. The petitioners were those who opposed him at the election; and the first signature was that of Mr. Howell, whom he defeated; and the next that of Thomas Pierce, who was Mr. Howell's electioneering agent — a gentleman of whom, on a recent occasion, it had been said, that he had redeemed sixty years of Toryism by three years of Radicalism. He (Sir H. Hardinge) most distinctly denied, on behalf of himself, his agents, or his friends, that there was one single instance of bribery or corruption at his election. The House would recollect that a petition had been presented, charging him, his agents, and friends, with bribery; and yet, after waiting three months, and Mr. Pierce being the agent—

Mr. *Buller* interrupted the hon. and gallant Officer, by saying, that there was no charge of bribery. Indeed, he believed, that there was not the slightest suspicion of bribery against the hon. and gallant Officer.

Sir *Henry Hardinge* read an extract from the former petition, in which himself, his agents, &c., were charged with bribery and corruption. He declared that he held the offence of bribery in so odious a light—every voter being obliged to take the bribery oath—that sooner than have subjected the voters to the offence of perjury, he would have lost his election. Although the former petitioners had had three months, they failed to enter into the requisite sureties; and he had, in consequence, never had an opportunity to declare that he was not the guilty person he had been accused of being. He was prepared—and that was known to his counsel and agents—to meet the charge, and to deny and defy the proof that there was a single case of bribery; and he believed that the reason the petition was not prosecuted was, that the petitioners were convinced they could not bring forward a single case; and they were afraid their petition would be deemed frivolous and vexatious. For several weeks, every Cornish paper had teemed with articles calling for subscriptions in support of the petitions, in order, as they said, "to drive the Conservative from the borough of Launceston;" and with considerable effect, too, for they had got five or six hundred pounds in that way. An hon. Baronet's (Sir William Molesworth) agent (he meant Mr. Woolcomb) had written articles of that kind in a Government paper; and, after subscribing five pounds in his own name, he subscribed twenty-five pounds in the name of a Radical friend to the cause; and he could tell the hon. Baronet, that it was generally said, that the hon. Baronet was that Radical friend. He had now been returned to Parliament eight or nine times, and he had never had any transaction of the nature of that which was asserted by the hon. Member. His agents and counsel knew all the details of the case; he stated them publicly, and they could catechise him if they thought proper. With regard to the influence that was complained of, he begged the hon. Member to recollect what was the influence of the Duke of Northumberland. The Duke had by no means a large property in that neighbourhood, and, therefore, the Duke's influence did not arise from his having a numerous tenantry; it arose from his having been for many years a large benefactor to all the public charities in that neighbourhood; and, on the occasion of the late contest, he (Sir Henry) could only state, that such was the impression of the people of Launceston on account of his benefactions, and the generosity and liberality with which they were dispensed, that they disregarded Mr. Howell, and spoke against him, because he had never made any benefaction to the town. In the year 1828, a review was taken of the benefactions of the noble Duke and Mr. Howell (the one living at a distance, and the other on the spot), when it appeared that the Duke of Northumberland, in the year 1822, subscribed to the public charities, Sunday-schools, and to the poor of the parish, 213*l.*, and towards the improvement and repairs of the town, 334*l.*; while, in that year, Mr. Howell, being a resident gentleman in the neighbourhood, had not subscribed one farthing. During the six years, between 1825 and 1831, the noble Duke had subscribed 5,233*l.*; while Mr. Howell had subscribed only 50*l.*; and that, too, in the year 1831, after the Reform Bill had been brought in. He would state, that it was not the influence of the Duke from property, but it was the influence of a liberal and generous nobleman, exercised on the spot; and if he were to go into details to justify that nobleman's conduct, of which he was sure the noble Duke would rather he should not have spoken, there would be enough to vindicate him, and not merely to clear him from all imputation, but to obtain for him a large share of admiration in every part of the county, similar to that which his conduct excited in Launceston. But, he would say, the Duke of Northumberland had not, in the town of Launceston, one dozen of tenants, and that he had not in the borough of Launceston one-half of the same proportion of tenants as the Duke of Bedford had got in Tavistock. If the hon. Gentleman wished to have examples to justify him in calling for an extension of the constituency, he should look nearer home, and he would find much stronger ones. There was the borough of Tavistock, with its population of 5,600, which returned two Members, yet it polled only 193 at the late election; while Launceston, with a population of 5,384, had only one Member, yet polled 243 votes. Knaresborough and Totness stood in the same relative position. He was quite astonished to find the statements of the noble Lord who introduced the Reform Bill, that it would add to the constituency of the boroughs upwards of 110,000. There were sixty-five old boroughs, which at the late election had polled only 83,809, while there had been contested elections in every one, and under the old system those boroughs had polled 95,040. The Corporation of Launceston had also been charged with using undue influence in having a power to license public-houses. There had been only one person licensed since the passing of the Bill, and he was one of those who had signed the petition.

Sir *William Molesworth* said, without an increase in the constituency, Launceston would be a mere nomination borough—this was not his opinion only, but that of ninety-nine out of every 100 of his constituents. He did not accuse the hon. and gallant Baronet of those practices; in fact, he believed that he was quite unaware of them; but he would assert that they were carried on. In his opinion, the person who caused them was as bad as the person who practised them. There was intimidation at Launceston, and that led to immorality. The chief cause was the Duke of Northumberland, and he was the arch-criminal.

Sir *Henry Hardinge:* It is false. If the hon. Member means to assert, and continues to assert, that the Duke of Northumberland is the arch-criminal in those demoralizing practices, I will again meet it in the way I have done, and characterise such an assertion as being false.

The *Speaker* said, that all the right hon. Baronet meant was, that if such an assertion were made, he would deny the truth of it in the strongest language that the forms of the House would allow. But the right hon. Gentleman did not mean to use any language which would be disorderly.

Sir *William Molesworth* would still assert that the Duke of Northumberland was the principal cause of intimidation in the borough, and that the system pursued created much immorality.

Sir *Henry Hardinge* observed, that if the hon. Member still persisted in that assertion, he must reprobate it in the strongest terms of indignation the forms of the House would allow him to use.

Sir *William Molesworth* would still adhere to his assertion.

Sir *Henry Hardinge* said, that with regard to the statements that had been made as to intimidation, and rewards and punishments, that had been held out, he must observe, that, at the late election, two members of Mr. Howell's Committee had promised the hon. Baronet's (Sir William Molesworth) custom to a voter who had already promised him his vote, provided he would break his faith and vote for Mr. Howell. With regard to the notoriety that had been expressed of Launceston becoming a nomination borough, he would assert that that arose, not from the real circumstances in which the borough was placed, but in consequence of his having defeated the Whig candidate.

Sir *William Molesworth* said, that if what the right hon. Baronet had stated was the fact, he felt more indignant at such a use of his name than words could express.

Petition laid on the Table.

THE MALT DUTIES.] Lord *Althorp* said: I am quite persuaded that every Gentleman in the House must be anxious to hear what I wish to state on the present occasion. The decision of the House on Friday being very peculiar, considering the circumstances under which it took place, has, as I stated at the time, placed Government under great embarrassment; and after taking this question into our consideration, his Majesty's Ministers have felt it desirable to bring the question again before the House, and in such a manner that the whole state of the case may be fairly brought forward, and that the House may see clearly all the consequences which must take place, in consequence of the proceeding of Friday night, and come to a decision with their eyes open. That decision may be precisely the same as that which they came to before, or it may differ from it; but there is a necessity for a clear understanding upon this subject. Sir, with this view, and believing that this will be the mode which will conduce most to this end, I now give notice, that it is my intention to move as an amendment to the motion of the hon. Baronet, the member for the City of London, to-morrow evening, this Resolution, which I will read now, in order that it may be placed on the votes of the House, that hon. Gentlemen may have the opportunity of considering the effect of it:—"That the deficiency of the Revenue which would be occasioned by a reduction of the tax on malt to 10*s.* a quarter, and by the repeal of the taxes on houses and windows, could only be supplied by the substitution of a general tax on property, and would occasion an extensive change in our whole financial system, which would at present be inexpedient."

Lord Althorp then moved, that the House should resolve itself into a Committee of Supply.

Sir *William Ingilby* asked the noble Lord what he intended to do respecting the vote which the House had come to last Friday night? He could assure the House, that he had not brought forward his motion with any view of embarrassing Ministers. The Resolution having been carried by a majority, the manner in which the noble Lord had taken it up had gone through the country, and the country expected that the measure would be carried into effect. He asked if it was the intention of the noble Lord to carry that Resolution into effect, or what it was the noble Lord intended to do?

Lord *Althorp* said, there had been some misunderstanding respecting what he (Lord Althorp) had said on Friday night. What he did then say—at all events what he meant to say, and what he believed he did say in so many words—was, that although the question was carried by a very small majority, he would not take advantage of another division the same evening, as he might have done, after the previous division, by again dividing the House on the main question. He felt as other Gentlemen, who had been accustomed to such matters had always felt, that he might, if he thought proper, divide the House more than once, but he would not take the chance of Gentlemen coming in after the first division, in order to obtain a second division. As to what he intended to do, he should have thought the Motion of which he had just given notice would have been sufficient.

The Marquess of *Chandos* rose to express his deep regret to find that there was any intention to get rid of the vote of the House of Commons, on a motion of the greatest importance to the country at large. The House could not have been taken by surprise by the hon. Baronet's (Sir William Ingilby's) Motion. They must have been prepared for it; but what he most regretted was, that there should be any attempt on the part of a Minister of the Crown in that Reformed House, from which so much was expected, to set aside the vote come to on that occasion; that Members should be told they voted improperly, and that he would give them another opportunity of correcting their mistakes. He begged leave to express his earnest and sincere hope, that when the question was again brought forward, the vote would stand as at present. For himself, he should be ashamed if he should be supposed capable of altering his vote on so important a question—a question so deeply affecting the landed interest. He would rather, indeed, throw up his seat, than, at the call of the Minister of the Crown, vote directly contrary to the vote he had previously given.

Mr. *Tennyson* said, undoubtedly the noble Lord (Lord Althorp) was best qualified to give a construction to what he did say, or intended to say, on the previous occasion referred to, and although he (Mr. Tennyson) was ready to accept the explanation which had been given, yet, he must say, that it was uniformly circulated through the Press, and was the general understanding of the Members in the House, that the noble Lord would, notwithstanding the smallness of the majority, feel it to be his duty to carry the Resolution into effect [" *no, no!*" " *yes, yes!*"] Gentlemen cried " no," but he should like to know whether those who uttered those cries were present. Whilst he said this in justice to himself, he was bound also, in justice to the noble Lord to say, that he was satisfied the noble Lord did not mean so to express himself, and he was ready to abide by the explanation given by the noble Lord himself. He must say, that he did not think any question of that kind ought, in a Reformed Parliament, to affect the stability of any Administration. The former degraded Parliaments were more the Privy Council of the Minister than the Representatives of the people, and, of course, when they differed ftom him on any question, he had only to resign; but at present the Ministers came down and told them what sum was wanted, and how they proposed to raise it. Parliament, if it truly represented the people, might fairly say to Ministers, and Ministers would be bound to listen to them, " we do not wish to be taxed in the particular way you propose, but would prefer another way." For his own part, he should be ashamed of himself, if being ready to vote for the Repeal of the Malt-tax, and of the House and Window-tax, he were not also ready to vote a substitute for those taxes. He could not agree with the hon. member for Middlesex, that any screwing and saving could make up six or seven millions deficiency. The utmost that could be saved from the expenditure was two or three millions. He was, therefore, for one, prepared to agree to a Property Tax. So far from thinking that this would be a grievance to the landed interest, he was certain that it would, from the general prosperity that would be diffused throughout the country, be the greatest boon that could be granted it. He rose, however, chiefly to express his regret that the Minister of the Crown intended to come down to propose the rescinding of a vote of that House. It could not be said, that due notice had not been given of the motion for the reduction of the Malt-tax, for, in addition to the notice of the hon. Baronet, the member for Lincolnshire, his hon. friend the member for Surrey had a notice upon the paper, for the same purpose, and therefore Ministers could not say, that they had been taken by surprise, or unprepared. He did not think that the course of proceeding which it was intended to recommend to Parliament in this instance was one that the House ought to adopt. If they did adopt such a course, and if they rescinded their vote, the repeal of the House and Window-tax could not take place, and thus the old system would still go on. Now, he was persuaded that the House, under such circumstances would quickly find that that system would never do; indeed, he was convinced that they must, sooner or later, come to a complete revision of the financial system of the country. They must come to a Property-tax; nothing else would satisfy the people of this country, and nothing else was calculated to place the country once more in a prosperous condition.

Mr. *Robinson* said, that he had no desire to place the noble Lord in a dilemma and contradiction, but it appeared to him to be of some importance to consider how the noble Lord stood with the House, and it was a matter of great importance that it should be generally understood what the noble Lord did say at the close of Friday night. He would state the impression which was then made upon him by what the noble Lord said, and he had paid great attention to what had fallen from the noble Lord. He believed that the noble Lord's words were these—that though the majority was small, yet that he felt certainly bound to acquiesce in the passing of the Resolution, or that he should not oppose it. [Cries of "*No, no.*"] He might have been—he no doubt was—mistaken, but certainly, agreeably to what had been said by the noble Marquess, the member for Buckinghamshire, he understood the noble Lord the Chancellor of the Exchequer to express his decided intention to acquiesce in the vote of the House. He would ask the House in what situation they were likely to be placed to-morrow when the noble Lord came down and proposed his Resolution to them? He did not complain of that Resolution; he thought that it was putting the question upon the right issue. He agreed with the hon. member for Lambeth that it was very improper for hon. Members to call for great reductions of taxation—reductions that could not possibly be met by corresponding reductions in the public expenditure without supplying the means from some other source. He was glad that Ministers had taken a decided course on this occasion. It was right that the country should see what were the intentions of those Gentlemen who would vote for the reduction of one-half of the Malt-duty, and would afford the Government no means of getting out of the dilemma into which they were thus thrown: it was right that the country should understand what the House was about, and he thought that the vote of to-morrow night would go far to clear up that point. He would wish both the Government and the House to consider the situation in which they would be placed if, by any means whatever, the Resolution proposed by the noble Lord should be carried. Would it not then be said, and justly said, that a House of Commons, consisting of 300 and odd Members, came to a deliberate vote, upon due notice, for reducing a portion of the burthens of the people, and that that vote was considered a proper subject for revision? He had never been in the habit of using language in that House calculated to produce an unfavourable impression of it in the country, and he should not commence that career now, but he could not avoid stating what would be the necessary and inevitable consequences of the revision of this vote. The people would see that the House of Commons, consisting very often of not more than thirty or forty members, had passed Estimates for imposing burthens upon them to a large amount, and that in no single instance had such votes been subjected to a revision, whereas that when a House of 300 and odd Members decided upon reducing their burthens, that vote was subjected to revision, and actually to be rescinded. If the noble Lord's Resolution should be carried, no measure that he knew of would provoke so much discussion, and when so much obloquy had been already excited, let them not, he would entreat them, add to it by doing that the effect of which would be to bring the House of Commons into disrepute with the people. In conclusion, he would invoke the House to pause well before it came to consider that discussion of which the noble Lord had given notice for to-morrow, to consider well what would be the necessary and inevitable consequence of overturning the vote of Friday night.

Sir *John Wrottesley* said, that he felt it necessary, in consequence of what had fallen from the two hon. Members who had just spoken, to address a few words to the House. He considered that his noble friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer had explained precisely the terms which he had used on Friday night. He (Sir John Wrottesley) was just behind his noble friend at the time, and he understood him exactly in the way in which he had now stated his meaning to the House. He was sure that the mistake must have arisen in consequence of a misapprehension by hon. Gentlemen of the mode in which the question was put in that House—a mode which was certainly ambiguous, and liable to misapprehension. The first question put on the occasion referred to was, "that the words proposed to be left out stand part of the question." Upon that question the division took place; but after it was carried in the negative, then came the main question—"that the words 'it is the opinion of this House that the duty on malt be reduced to 10*s.* the quarter' be thereto added." That was a separate and distinct question, upon which his noble friend could again have divided the House. It was then that his noble friend addressed the House, and he understood him to say that after the division, he would not take advantage of any Gentleman coming into the House to oppose it again. His own attention was first called to the misapprehension as to what had fallen from his noble friend by seeing it erroneously stated the next morning in the usual channels of public information. He was not prepared to state what would be the course which he would follow when the Motion was brought forward to-morrow; no doubt every hon. Member would deeply and seriously consider the subject. Without, however, stating what were his opinions on the subject to which that Motion referred, he must protest against the principle that because 162 Members of that House had given an opinion upon a certain subject, therefore, that the remainder of the 658 Members had no right to give an opinion upon it. There were several different stages through which the Resolution in question would have to pass before it could be laid on the Table of the House in the shape of a Bill, and before it arrived at that stage, the House would have several distinct opportunities of deciding and dividing upon it.

Mr. *Matthias Attwood* had understood the noble Lord precisely as the noble Marquess the member for Buckinghamshire. He had listened attentively to the noble Lord, and, after the vote was decided, the words which fell upon his ear from the lips of the noble Lord were these: "That the vote had placed the Government in a state of considerable embarrassment; but, after the vote to which the House had come, he could not think of offering any opposition to the carrying of it into effect." [" *No, no.*"] He was ready to accept the explanation of the noble Lord, but those were the words, as he recollected them. He would make but one other observation, which was, that he trusted the Ministry would well consider the consequences of the proceeding of which they had given notice. Other Motions for rescinding the decisions of the House would be made. He, for one, was disposed, if such a principle was adopted, to move that the Resolutions come to upon his Motion a few evenings ago be rescinded, and he called upon the Government to pause before they opened so wide a door. He did not agree with the hon. member for Lambeth, that former Houses of Commons had been degraded, but what, he would ask, would be thought of the dignity and character of the present House if it should rescind its solemn decision at the command of the Minister? He was quite satisfied that the proceeding, if adopted, would lead to great changes in the proceedings of the House, and he dreaded the manner in which it was likely to be received by the country at large. He dreaded the operation of such conduct with regard to the reduction of a tax. He again called on the noble Lord to consider well the consequences to which his Motion, if adopted, would lead.

Mr. *Benett* confirmed, from his own recollection, the explanation already made by Lord Althorp of the meaning and terms of his statement on Friday night.

Mr. *Hall Dare* said, he had not had the good fortune to be present on Friday night, but he concurred with the hon. member for Wolverhampton, that after the decision on that night, notwithstanding the explanation of the noble Lord as to his meaning on that particular question, it would be a bad precedent if an attempt were made to rescind a vote to which the House had deliberately come. The noble Lord had called upon the House to look with their eyes open on the alternative he would present them. As an independent Member of the House, he was prepared to look at the subject with his eyes open. He was prepared to vote for a property tax, and to consider the existing taxation of the country, for he believed that a Property tax was the most equitable tax, it being but just that those who had property to protect should contribute principally to the exigences of the State. He agreed with the hon. member for Lambeth that the reduction of the Malt-tax would place Ministers under the necessity of providing some other tax in its stead. It was necessary that the revenue should be maintained, that faith should be kept with the public creditor, and that the establishments of the country should also be maintained. Looking, however, at our foreign policy, at the state of our foreign relations, at the state of the East of Europe, at our West India Colonies, and at the unfortunate state of Ireland—looking at all these interests, he thought the noble Lord could not dispense with the present amount of revenue. He was perfectly ready to vote for a Property-tax as a substitute for the Malt-tax. As to the Malt-tax, he should, if he had been present on Friday evening, have voted for the Motion of the hon. Baronet; but he should have done so with regret, as he only considered it a half measure. He, for one, was ready to reduce the whole of the Malt-tax, and substitute a Property-tax in its stead. He agreed with the hon. member for Oldham in the opinion, that if they reduced the tax 10*s.* the quarter, the reduction in price would only be from 60*s.* to 50*s.*; whereas if they took off the whole of the duty, it would be reduced in price to 20*s.* He, for one, should be perfectly prepared to vote for the alternative suggested by the noble Lord.

Mr. *Baring*, as far as he was concerned, would not give encouragement to further discussion on the Malt-tax; but having been one of those who thought it fit to vote in favour of the reduction of the Malt-duty, he thought it proper to say, that the declaration of the noble Lord, as it struck him, might have been taken by hon. Gentlemen either to mean one thing or the other. He meant in what he said, and which had excited such merriment, that the noble Lord, when he declared he should abide by the resolution, meant that he either would not negative it on the question being a second time put from the Chair, or that Government would abide by it. The declaration might, without stretch, have been interpreted either way, but no Gentleman could suppose that the noble Lord meant, without consultation with his colleagues, to bind Government as to the course they would take on so important a question. The noble Lord had given his notice for to-morrow, and what the noble Lord proposed was, "would they have the repeal of the Malt-tax, and the House and Window tax, and were they prepared to take, in substitution of them, a tax on property and income"—not a tax on property alone, or income alone, but a tax on property and income? Undoubtedly that was a question most important for the country to consider, and if he had any objection to it, it was the short notice that had been given of it. He was perfectly aware that the case might be considered one of pressure, and especially as the worthy Alderman's Motion stood for to-morrow. But the question had never been fairly put to the House, and, with most unfeigned sincerity he would say, that he could not see how it could properly be discussed at so short a warning. With great reluctance should he be brought within twenty-four hours' notice, to determine a question of such conclusive importance to the future happiness and prosperity of the country. It would be most necessary to consult the opinions of their constituents and the country upon it. He was bound to say he never saw much wisdom in a commutation of taxes. He always thought that such propositions were altogether visionary, and replete with danger, mischief, and loss, especially where there were great, multifarious, and complicated interests to be taken into consideration, as was the case in this country. He complained, then, that within twenty-four hours' notice, the House was to be brought to a division on this most important subject. In fact, he thought that the reduction of the Malt-tax, for which he voted on Friday, might have been afforded without bringing on the necessity of entertaining the question of a commutation of taxes; but even allowing that it were put to him distinctly, would he have the Malt-duty reduced and the Property-tax imposed, or the malt duty be left alone, he should certainly say, leave the Malt-duty alone, and spare him the infliction of a Property-tax.

Sir *Robert Peel* said, he should follow the example of his hon. friend, and postpone giving any detailed opinion upon the great question which was to come on for discussion to-morrow night till the proper time arrived. He would observe, however, with respect to the event which had brought on the present discussion, that if he had been present on Friday night, which accident alone prevented him from being, he should have given his most decided opposition to the proposition for reducing the Malt-tax. He should have done so, not because he did not entertain a sincere desire to see that tax abated, if possible, but because he should have looked forward to the consequences of a partial abatement of that tax, and to its bearing on the question of the Corn-laws, and upon the question of the substitution of a Property-tax, which latter measure would consitute of itself a complete revolution in the financial system of the country. He, for one, would not consent to inflict an injury upon the public creditor by voting for the repeal of any one tax until he felt assured of obtaining a substitute for it. With regard to the success of establishing a Property and Income-tax in substitution of other taxes, he entertained very serious doubts. He did not mean to say, that virtually to rescind in one night a vote to which the House had come on another was a course free from evil, but he thought that a far greater evil would result from the maintenance of the doctrine that questions of such immense importance should be finally determined by a House consisting of only half the number of the whole House. He knew not for what all the regulations for the conduct of business in the House were established, with regard to the different stages which a measure must pass through, if they were not meant to guard against the House being taken by surprise. In the present case, however, he was bound to say there had been no surprise; he was of opinion, on the contrary, that hon. Members ought to have been present in the discharge of their duty. But then the regulations of the House to which he had alluded were intended, not only to guard against surprise, but also against sudden impulses, under which head he must include the decision which had formed the subject of the present discussion. The course he meant to adopt with respect to the question of the imposition of a Property-tax might probably be inferred from the opinions he had already expressed, but feeling that question to be one of immense importance, and one involving considerations of great magnitude, he should abstain until it was fairly before the House from entering into a discussion upon its merits.

Lord *Althorp* said, that an hon. friend of his had objected to the shortness of the notice he had given for the Motion he intended to submit to the House; but if his hon. friend considered the situation in which the affairs of the country would be placed while the decision of such a question stood over, he was sure he would not think the notice too short. In the Resolution which he had read to the House he had distinctly stated that the imposition of a Property-tax would be at present inexpedient.

Lord *Sandon* assured the noble Lord that if he had stated the considerations on Friday last which he had that night submitted to the House, a different conclusion would, no doubt, have been come to. He would take that opportunity, as a sincere friend of the present Government and an advocate for their remaining in office, of entreating them to come forward more frequently and state more at large their views on great public questions, especially as there were so many new Members in the House, who, of course, were not very well acquainted with the bearing of such questions as older Members.

Lord *Ebrington* said, that the hon. Gentleman opposite could not have heard the speech of his noble friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the occasion to which he had alluded, or he would have found that his noble friend distinctly said that the imposition of a Property-tax was inexpedient. Although he so understood his noble friend, he yet wished that his noble friend had expressed himself with more clearness on the subject. He did not think, however, his expressions had been so ambiguous as to bear the construction which had been put upon them.

On the Question that the Speaker leave the Chair—

THE GLASGOW LOTTERY.] Sir *Robert Inglis* wished to call the attention of the House to a most objectionable system of raising money which had recently been practised, and to which that House had been a party. He alluded to the Glasgow Lottery. A Bill for effecting certain improvements in Glasgow had passed that House during the last Session as a private Bill, but he believed that it was unknown to either the Government or any hon. Gentlemen present, except those intrusted with the conduct of the measure, that its object was by establishing a lottery to raise funds. This, however, turned out to be the fact, and he therefore, wished to suggest to the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether they ought not to adopt some means of preventing private bills from passing without the House being apprised of their object.

Lord *Althorp* replied, that his Majesty's Government had not the least idea that a Bill authorizing the establishment of a lottery had passed the Houses of Parliament, until he was apprised of the existence of the lottery itself. His attention was then drawn to the subject, and, on looking at the Act he found that no allusion was made to the lottery in its title, and that the word "lottery" itself never once occurred throughout the Act. It was, to say the truth, most skilfully drawn up, and the parties who had concocted it had fully succeeded in keeping the House and the Government entirely ignorant of the real nature of the Bill. He could only say, that as far as the Government was concerned, no countenance nor assistance had been given to the act in question.

Sir *Robert Peel:* If the lottery is not yet drawn the Bill may be repealed. ["*It is drawn.*"] Well, then, all I can say is that those who were parties to the transaction ought to be subjected to public punishment.

The House resolved itself into a Committee of—

SUPPLY — ORDNANCE ESTIMATES.] Colonel *Maberly* rose to propose the Ordnance Estimates, which he said were similar to those which had been proposed on previous occasions; but he trusted, that he should satisfy the House, that every endeavour had been made to reduce the expense as far as was practicable. Indeed, he might say that a most material diminution of the expense of these Estimates had been effected since the last year's accounts. The gallant Member then entered into a comparative statement of the amount of the expenditure in preceding years, as contrasted with that of 1833 and 1834. It appeared that in 1729 the Estimates amounted to 1,500,000*l.*; in 1830 to 1,800,700*l.*; in 1831, to 1,714,000*l.*; in 1832, to 1,692,000*l.*; and in 1833 and 1834, to 1,597,000*l.*, which, with the supplemental Estimates, made a sum of 1,604,000*l.* Upon the whole there would be a saving of 88,000*l.*, which saving would, however, be diminished by the supplemental vote for this year of 38,000*l.* The gallant Member concluded by stating that he had effected as great a reduction in the expense of the estimates as he was able consistently with the interest of the public and the efficiency of the service, and moving the first Resolution, "That a sum not exceeding 71,996*l.* be granted for the civil establishments of the Tower, Pall-mall and Dublin."

Mr. *Hume* said, that he was sorry to observe the inattention with which the statement of the gallant Member had been received—a statement referring to a subject of such immense importance. He could not compliment the gallant Member on the point on which he seemed to pique himself—namely, introducing the Estimates in the plan adopted by all his predecessors. In his opinion, the House ought to come to the determination of suiting the expenditure to the income, and not regulate the income to the expenditure. Unless this determination were come to by the House, he must say they would not be doing justice to the country, and he was sorry to see that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not yet taken the hint. He disliked the whole system on which the Ordnance was conducted, nor did he think that any serious discussion upon the Estimates would be productive of a beneficial result. They had voted the amount of the army, and a proportional amount of artillery must follow as a matter of course; he hardly knew, therefore, how he should deal with those Estimates. The gallant Member had contrasted them with the Estimates of 1792. Different from those they were indeed. Why, the average expenditure for Ordnance Estimates, including sea service and Ordnance extraordinary, was but 49,642*l.* in the years 1790, 1791, and 1792. In order to lessen the too great expenditure for these Estimates, he would propose to reduce the post of the Master-General of the Ordnance, and would, as a further measure of improvement, suggest that the Engineer corps should be placed under the immediate control of the Commander-in-chief. This was the course pursued with respect to that corps in other countries, and why not in this? England was the only country in which the artillery was so separated from the superintendence of the Commander-in-chief as to be almost unknown to him. In the English army there were besides fewer engineers and artillerymen, who were intrusted with the care of any situation of importance, than in any other army in the world. Why was that? In the French army especially, the engineers and artillerymen were intrusted with very important duties. He wished to simplify the system adopted in England, by establishing a store branch connected with the Ordnance. If the artillery and engineers were placed under the control of the Commander-in-chief, as he suggested, there would remain only a simple store account under the supervision of the Ordnance department, and this branch of the service might then be conducted for one-tenth of the expense which it cost at present.

Mr. *Briscoe* rose to order, and expressed his regret, that whilst the Estimates were under consideration, and the amount of the expenditure of the country about to be fixed, a constant noise should be kept up in the House. It was the duty of hon. Members to watch the Estimates closely, with the view of seeing whether any reduction could be effected in their amount, for the reduction of the Estimates was one mode by which they might hope to lessen the taxation of the country. It would be only decorous to pay some degree of attention to the business before the Committee.

Mr. *Hume* said, he believed he was only losing time in addressing the Committee. He could not hope by any exertion of his to effect such a reduction in the present Estimates as would enable the Government to remit taxation to any considerable amount. He wished the noble Lord the Chancellor of the Exchequer had that day followed the example which was set by the Ministers in 1816, by coming down to the House and withdrawing the whole of the Estimates, with the view of substituting for them a set considerably reduced in amount. The noble Lord himself was one of those who in 1816 joined in a vote which compelled the then Ministers to withdraw their Estimates and substitute others of a reduced amount, although they had previously declared, like the present Ministers, that they were reduced to the lowest possible scale. He wished before he sat down to ask whether the Ordnance establishments in Pall-mall, and at the Tower had been consolidated?

Lord *Althorp* said, that if he had considered the Estimates which had been submitted to the House were greater than the service of the State required, he would have followed the precedent to which the hon. member for Middlesex had alluded, but by so doing he should be admitting that he had consented to the introduction of estimates which were larger than the exigencies of the case required. He was still of opinion that the public service required the establishments which he had proposed, and that being his opinion, he should not feel himself justified in acting upon the suggestion of the hon. Member. In answer to the question of the hon. Member, he begged leave to state that the establishments in Pall-mall, and at the Tower, had not been consolidated, because different classes of services were brought under supervision of those establishments, the commingling of which would be injurious to the public interests.

Vote agreed to.

On the Question that 277,156*l.* for the charge of the royal regiment of artillery be granted,

Mr. *Hume* said, that this service was kept up on the highest war scale, and that half the number of men would in these times of peace, answer all the purposes for which an artillery was required. He would therefore move as an amendment, and that the number of men should be reduced from 6,000 to 4,000 or as a money vote, that the estimate should be reduced to 184,771*l.*

Colonel *Maberly* maintained, that the present amount of men was hardly adequate to the wants of the service. The Master-General had five demands from the colonies for artillerymen; but owing to the paucity of men, was only able to comply with two of them.

Mr. *Hume* said, that his reduced vote would be 1,000 men more than was found wanting in 1792.

The Committee divided on Mr. Hume's Amendment;—Ayes 31: Noes 140: Majority 109.

The Vote agreed to.

List of the AYES.

ENGLAND.
Aglionby, H. A.
Attwood, M.
Beauclerk, Major A
Clay, W.
Faithful, G.
Fielden, J.
Godson, R.
Humphery, J.
Lloyd ,J. H.
Marsland, T.
Morrison, J.
Palmer, General
Parrot, J.
Phillips, M.
Potter, R.
Stavely, J. K.
Thicknesse, R.
Torrens, Colonel
Turner, W.
Wason, R.
Whalley, Sir S.
Williams, Colonel

IRELAND.
Bellew, R. M.
Finn, W. F.
Fitzgerald, T.
Lalor, P.
O'Brien, B.
O'Dwyer, A. C.
Ruthven, E.
Ruthven, E. S.
Vigors, N. A.

TELLER.
Hume, J.

On the Question that 25,587*l.* be granted to defray the expense of superintendence of the building and repair of barracks in Great Britain, Ireland, and the colonies, being put,

Mr. *Hume* said, that he objected to the amount of the vote, but from the result of the late division, he concluded it would be useless to offer any opposition to the grant. He thought that as the House seemed determined not to support any proposition for reduction, the sooner it closed its doors the better.

The vote was then agreed to; as were several other votes after a short conversation.

On the Question being proposed, that 2,179*l.* be granted for Exchequer fees,

Mr. *Hume* said, he would take the sense of the House on the vote. For the last nine years promises had been made by successive Chancellors of the Exchequer that this system of fees should be abolished; and yet it continued to the present moment. He was determined now to bring the question to the test of a division.

Lord *Althorp* hoped that the House would not object to this vote for the present year, when he stated that a measure was in preparation which would abolish all those fees.

Mr. *Hume* said, that if he was to believe all that he was told, a measure had been in preparation for the last nine years. Would the noble Lord fix a day for the introduction of the measure he spoke of? The system of paying fees to public officers on the payment or receipt of public money was most abominable, and ought to be put an end to.

Lord *Althorp* said, the measure he alluded to had not been in preparation for nine years, though he admitted that it had been some time under consideration. It was not, however, surprising that a measure, the purpose of which was to effect a general arrangement with regard to the Exchequer, should take a long time in the preparation; but he could inform the hon. member for Middlesex that the Bill was now in a state of great forwardness.

Mr. *Hume* asked whether he was to understand that the noble Lord was pledged to bring his Bill in, and pass it during the present Session?

Lord *Althorp* pledged himself to bring it in, but he could not pledge himself to pass it.

Vote agreed to.

GRANT TO MR. MARSHALL.] On the Question that the Chairman do report progress, and ask leave to sit again,

Mr. *Hume* said, that he wished to call the attention of the House to a matter of much public importance, of which he had previously given notice. To those who had been as long in that House as he had been, and who had laboured as sedulously in the public service, it would not be necessary for him to address many observations to prove the difficulty which attended all investigations connected with matters of finance, and how much the public in general, and the Members of that House in particular, must feel themselves indebted to any person undertaking any work calculated to facilitate those investigations. The House would recollect that a Committee had some time ago been appointed, and had made a report upon the subject of public documents. In the course of their investigation they found considerable difficulty in collecting information respecting the past income of the country, the increase and decrease of trade, and many other matters connected with the financial and commercial state of the kingdom. A gentleman of the name of Marshall was called before the Committee, it being well known that he had employed himself for the last twelve years in collecting and classifying a variety of public accounts, and at the close of his examination he laid before the Committee a collection of papers containing a complete view of the expenditure and revenue of the kingdom, and forming a series of statistical accounts of the most valuable nature. Indeed, there was scarcely a subject connected with finance or commerce respecting which information might not be gained by reference to Mr. Marshall's book, and he had no doubt that his work would save the country large sums of money, which were now expended annually in printing returns and public accounts for the use of the Members of that House. So convinced was he of the value of Mr. Marshall's work, both as respected the information it would afford and the expense it would save the country, that he some time ago represented to his Majesty's Ministers the propriety of giving that gentleman 500*l.* to enable him to complete his book. Nor was he singular in his opinion of the merit of Mr. Marshall's book, for the member for Harwich, formerly Chancellor of the Exchequer, had said, that he considered that 10,000 guineas would not pay the actual labour of the work, and no price could remunerate the talent displayed in the arrangement and classification of the materials. The Committee also considered the work to be one of great utility, and in order to encourage Mr. Marshall to persevere in his labours, they came to the resolution of recommending the House to purchase 1,250 copies of the book for the use of the Members. He considered a work of that kind as nothing less than a great national undertaking, and he could inform the House that works of a similar kind were looked upon as great national undertakings, both in the United States and amongst the most civilized and advanced countries of Europe. His Majesty's Government had thought so favourably of the work, that they had gone as far as perhaps an Executive Government ought, in awarding to Mr. Marshall a sum of 500*l.*; but he had no difficulty in saying that fifty times that sum would scarcely represent the value such a compilation would be likely to prove to the community; and he felt quite assured, that if hon. Members would only take the trouble to refer to the book itself they would be at once sensible of its importance. He was aware that a new department was about to be established for statistical purposes; of that department he highly approved; and he hoped that it would be carried to a much greater extent than had been originally proposed; but whether it was or not formed was a question which had no bearing upon the present discussion. It was of the utmost importance that the Members of that House and the constituency at large should be made acquainted with the actual expense of every portion of the public service and of every island, and every colony connected with Great Britain. He should conclude by moving, that the Committee agree in the recommendation of the Committee on Public Documents, that 1,250 copies of Mr. Marshall's digest of information, derived from parliamentary documents since the year 1798, be purchased for the use of the Members of the House and that a sum not exceeding 2,625*l.* be granted for the purchase of the said copies.

Lord *Althorp* said, he was inclined to leave the vote to the general feeling of the House whether the proposed grant of money was, under the circumstances of the case, justifiable. He did not mean to deny that great ability and industry had been displayed by Mr. Marshall in the compilation of the materials of his work; but it should be borne in mind that that gentleman had already received a grant of 500*l.*, and that great difference of opinion existed as to the propriety of that grant at the time it was proposed. He had been ready to make the first advance of 500*l.* upon his own responsibility, and that circumstance must be a sufficient proof of his sense of the utility of the work. He would leave it to the House to decide whether it would sanction a second grant of a similar kind.

Mr. *Methuen* was hostile to this grant. He was surprised that the hon. member for Middlesex, who had so often depicted the distress of the country in the most lamentable colours, should now come forward with a proposal to throw away 2,600*l*. of the public money, by giving it to an individual of whom the House knew nothing save from the *ipse dixit* of the hon. Member himself. Such inconsistency was, to say the least of it, surprising. In the present condition of the country he never would consent to vote away such a sum for such a purpose, and if he divided against the grant alone, he certainly would press it to a division.

Mr. *George F. Young* said, that the excellence of this work should not rest any longer upon the unsupported *ipse dixit* of the hon. member for Middlesex. He could not say that he had perused this work of Mr. Marshall,—that was almost beyond any man's power,—but he had devoted many hours to an examination of it, and he could say, that he had never met in so brief a space so large a quantity of political information so lucidly and methodically arranged. It was a work that to Members of Parliament must be invaluable. Indeed, the labour of collecting the information contained in it would be inconsistent with the ordinary avocations of any Gentleman. He had purchased this work for himself, so fully was he convinced of its excellence. He cordially concurred with the proposition of the hon. member for Middlesex.

Mr. *Warburton* was proud to add his testimony in favour of this work to the testimony which had been already given by his two hon. friends, the members for Middlesex and Tynemouth.

An *Hon. Member* did not mean to disparage the merits of Mr. Marshall's work, but he could not agree with the hon. Gentleman who had preceded him, that hon. Members, instead of putting their own hands into their own pockets for the price of this volume, should seek to make the country pay the price of it for them. The notoriety which the work would get from the publication of this debate would be worth more to the compiler than the whole sum which the hon. member for Middlesex now proposed to give him. He should undoubtedly oppose the grant.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, that there was in favour of this grant the singular circumstance that it was recommended by his hon. friend the member for Middlesex, the great champion of economy upon all occasions. It was also recommended by the Committee upon Public Documents, and he understood that, useful as the work was, it could never be completed unless this sum was granted. He was convinced, from what he had seen and heard of this work, that for the charge of 2,600*l*. the public would get in return sufficient value.

An *Hon. Member* said that this volume was but a pocket edition of the library of the House; and yet hon. Gentlemen seemed inclined to impose upon the public a charge of 2,600*l*. to save themselves the trouble of consulting the documents which every man might easily find in the library. He was anxious to possess a book which had been so well spoken of, but he saw no reason why he should put his hand into the pocket of the public, instead of putting it into his own pocket to obtain a copy of it.

Mr. *Matthias Attwood* in supporting the grant, eulogized the fitness of Mr. Marshall for the important work which he had undertaken, and all but completed. That work had been of inestimable use to the hon. member for Middlesex, who had found his labours greatly facilitated by referring to the well-digested accounts contained in its pages.

Lord *John Russell* said, that he felt it his duty, as Chairman of the Committee on Public Documents, to state the grounds upon which that Committee had come to their recommendation. He certainly differed from the Committee as to the propriety of such a recommendation; for he preferred giving a certain sum of money to Mr. Marshall for the completion of this work, to giving him 2,600*l*. for 1,200 copies of it. 2,600*l*. was a large sum to be granted away for such a purpose; but hon. Gentlemen were not, perhaps, aware of the large sums which were annually paid in making out the returns moved for by hon. Members. Some of those returns had cost 2,000*l*. each, and others had reached as high as 4,000*l*. He should not have made this proposition himself, but as it was made, and as it had met the support of the Committee, he would give up his objections and vote for it.

Mr. *Slaney* considered that the important nature of this work rendered it true economy to make this grant.

Mr. *Poulett Thomson* said, that as he had opposed the Resolution in the Committee, he would state the grounds upon which he opposed it now, as he had opposed it formerly. He considered the work to be extremely valuable, and if he looked only to its merits, he should not be averse to the grant. He objected to it, however, upon two grounds—first, on account of the principle which it involved, and, secondly, on account of the mode in which it was proposed to make it. Mr. Marshall had commenced this work *proprio motu*: statistical works seldom repaid their compilers for the labour bestowed upon them. Would the House, therefore, sanction the principle, as they would do by sanctioning this grant, that a gentleman who had undertaken such a work should come down to the House and say, "I have lost by the printing of my work; it relates to public events and public documents; it contains public information, and therefore to you, Gentlemen of the House of Commons, I look for remuneration?" If the House adopted this principle on this occasion, it must be prepared to sit in judgment upon similar applications from the authors of every work of this kind which did not meet with public encouragement. Now as to the mode of making the grant. After the valuable testimony which several hon. Gentlemen whose words were authority had borne to the excellence of this work, he had no doubt that, if the public did not give it encouragement, there would be Members of Parliament enough ready to give it encouragement by paying out of their own pockets two guineas for it. He therefore trusted that this call upon the House to pay 2,600*l.* for putting a copy of this work into the bookcase of each Member of Parliament at the public expense, was a proposition to which the House would not give its consent without due consideration.

Mr. *Wynn* was inclined to support the grant. He had expected to have heard a more decided opinion given upon it than that which had been given by the noble Lord opposite, upon whom, in his character of Chancellor of the Exchequer, he looked as the guardian of the public purse. He had not seen the work of Mr. Marshall before that evening, but from what he had seen of it, he should say, that it was a work of first-rate utility, which loudly called for public encouragement. The right hon. Gentleman opposite seemed to imagine that, because it was worthy of public encouragement, it would therefore meet it; but no supposition could be more erroneous. He could mention many works of undoubted merit which had failed to obtain the patronage of the public. Among works of that description was a work of the highest authority regarding the forms and proceedings of that House; hon. Gentlemen must be aware that he was alluding to *Hatsell's Precedents.* That work had never paid the expense of paper and printing, and he knew that Mr. Hatsell had been a considerable loser by its publication. From the responsible and dignified situation which he had so long held in that House, Mr. Hatsell determined to make a present of it to the public, for he never expected to be remunerated by its sale for the expense and labour which he had bestowed upon it.

Lord *Sandon* said, that before the Committee proceeded to a division he should propose that 500*l.* or 1,000*l.* should be given to Mr. Marshall for the completion of his work, instead of 2,600*l.* for 1,200 copies for the use of Members of that House. If the original Motion were carried, the 658 Members of the present House of Commons would each be entitled to a copy of the work. Now, to all of that number, except perhaps a hundred, the book would be mere waste paper, and they would take an early opportunity of exchanging it with their booksellers for some works more to their taste and edification. The Members of the next House of Commons would also be in want of their copies. Some of them would obtain copies—others would not. The House of Commons after the next would be left entirely without copies of this important work. The Motion was therefore faulty, as it provided for the giving away a work of permanent importance to a body that was transient and changeable in its nature. He concluded by moving as an Amendment that a sum not exceeding 1,000*l.* should be granted to Mr. Marshall for the completion of his digest of the public accounts.

The Committee divided on Lord Sandon's Amendment—Ayes 75; Noes 117; Majority 42.

The Committee divided again on the Question that the sum of 1,500*l.* be granted to Mr. Marshall—Ayes 78; Noes 116: Majority 38.

The Committee divided on the orginal Motion—Ayes 106; Noes 88: Majority 18. House resumed.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, *April* 30, 1833.

Minutes.] Petitions presented. By Lord **Suffield**, from Liverpool, for the Abolition of Flogging.—By the Earl of **Rosebery**, from three Places, against the Existing System of Church Patronage in Scotland.—By the Marquess of **Downshire**, the Bishop of **Bristol**, and Lords **Bexley** and **Carbery**, from several Places, for the Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By the Earls of **Rosebery**, **Radnor**, **Uxbridge**, and **Cawdor**, and Lords **Carbery**, **de Dunstanville**, **Bexley**, and **Suffield**, from a great Number of Places,—for the Abolition of Slavery.

Labour Rate.] The Earl of *Winchilsea* begged to ask his noble friend when it was his intention to move the Second Reading of the Labour Rate Bill? In putting that question he wished to point out, that as regarded the proportion of Poor-rates which entitled parishes to bring themselves within the operation of the Act of last Session, that Act was defective. He could state, having been engaged in two counties in carrying the measure of last Session into effect, that several parishes were anxious to avail themselves of the benefit of the Act; but on account of the Poor-rates in those parishes being below the proportionate sum specified in the Act, they could not. In some instances, parishes had actually thrown persons on the Poor-rates for the purpose of bringing the parishes under the operation of the Act, by raising the rate, when these persons ought to have been supported by payments out of the Highway-rate. At the same time the Act had had a most beneficial effect. It had checked the demoralizing system of persons throwing themselves upon the Poor-rates for relief, and been productive of improved feelings in the minds of the labourers. It had also given great satisfaction to a large body of people wherever the plan had been carried into operation. In looking to the Amendment proposed by his noble friend, he observed that the surplus money was to be paid over into the hands of the overseers, to be applied to the general use of the poor; but if he might take the liberty, he would suggest to his noble friend that the money raised should be kept distinct from any assessment for the relief of the poor; and the surplus should be available for the relief of unemployed labourers only.

Lord *Suffield* could confirm the statement of the noble Earl, that the inconvenience in consequence of the rate entitling parishes to take advantage of this Act being fixed too high, was very great. Complaints had been made to him by several parishes in the county with which he was connected on this subject; and he had been desired, when the proper time should arrive, to propose an Amendment in that part of the Bill. As regarded the measure itself, there was no doubt but that it had been beneficial.

The Duke of *Richmond* had at the request of a right Reverend Prelate (the Bishop of London) deferred the Second Reading of this Bill until the Report of the Poor Laws Commission should be received. That Report would probably be made in the course of a fortnight or three weeks. He assured his noble friend that he was very anxious that the measure should be as effective as possible. He must, however, object to the Bill being called a "Labour-Rate Bill;" for, in fact, there was not one word in it which could justify such a designation.

Corn Laws.] Earl *Fitzwilliam* rose to bring forward his Resolutions relating to the Corn Laws, of which he had given notice before the Easter Recess. When he again mentioned the subject last week, he informed their Lordships that it was his intention to move his Resolutions *pro formâ*, and request that they should be printed, and the discussion upon them taken on a future occasion. He recollected on that occasion that their Lordships had acquiesced in this arrangement. If he had understood rightly that such was the wish of the House, he should move that the Resolutions be read, laid upon the Table, and printed, and the discussion be postponed until Tuesday next. He said, when he mentioned this subject last week, that it was not his intention to make a speech upon the present occasion, and he meant to adhere to what he had stated; he should, therefore, confine himself to stating, not any argument in support of the Resolutions, but merely the object of the Resolutions which he should have the honour of submitting. The first Resolution which he should propose would have reference to the price of corn since 1828. The second Resolution which he should propose would refer to the price of corn in those countries of the world which exported corn. The third Resolution referred to those countries which, like this country, were also importers of corn. The fourth Resolution which he should submit would relate to the total quantity of corn which had been imported into this country under the Act which now regulated the trade in corn, stating the rates of duty. The fifth Resolution would state similar facts in a somewhat different shape, having reference to the different rates of duty at which certain proportions of the totals had been produced. The sixth Resolution would state the annual average import, and the annual average revenue thereupon; and the subsequent Resolutions would then state the conclusions which he had come to, and which he hoped that their Lordships would also come to at no very distant day. He would, in the first place, beg leave to read the following Resolutions:—

1. Resolved.—That it appears to this House that the weekly average price of wheat, as fixed subsequent to the passing of the 9th George 4th, c. 60, was, on the following days, viz.—

	per quarter.			per quarter.	
	s.	*d.*		*s.*	*d.*
1828.—July 11...	55	7	1831.—Jan. 7 ...	68	3
Oct. 3. ...	65	0	April 1 ...	72	4
1829.—Jan. 2 ...	75	11	July 1 ...	66	7
April 3...	70	3	Oct. 7 ...	61	0
July 3 ...	68	2	1832.—Jan. 6 ...	59	1
Oct. 2 ...	60	0	April 6 ...	59	6
1830.—Jan. 1 ...	55	5	July 6 ...	63	2
April 2....	65	1	Oct. 5 ...	54	7
July 2 ...	68	6	1833.—Jan. 4 ...	52	6
Oct. 1 ...	62	3	April 5...	53	10

And that, on the 19th of September, 1828, the average was fixed at 58*s.* 6*d.*; and again, on the 24th of October, 1828, at 76*s.*; that, on the 5th of June, 1829, it was fixed at 71*s.* 5*d.*; and again, on the 30th of October, 1829, at 55*s.* 4*d.*; that, on the 6th of August 1830, it was fixed at 74*s.* 11*d.*; and on the 17th of September 1830, at 60*s.* 2*d*; and, further, that the highest average under the provisions of the said Act was 76*s.* 7*d.*, as fixed on the 14th of November 1828; and that the lowest average was 51*s.* 3*d.*, as fixed on the 19th of October, 1832.

2. That it further appears to this House, from the returns of his Majesty's Consuls abroad, that the mean prices of wheat, at the following times and places:

	Dantzic.		Hamburgh.		Leghorn.		Philadelphia.	
	s.	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*
July, 1828 ..	24	3	23	0	39	7	29	9
Oct., 1828 ..	56	6	41	8	44	9	37	2
Jan., 1829 ..	59	2	49	7	61	0	53	0
Apr., 1829 ..	43	2	46	11	52	4	51	0
July, 1829 ..	36	9	36	11	47	10	42	6
Oct., 1829 ..	38	1	34	6	38	7	35	0
Jan. 1830 ..	29	9	31	3	35	11	36	0
Apr. 1830 ..	33	9	31	0	39	7	..	..
July, 1830 ..	43	3	35	2	36	4	34	9
Oct., 1830 ..	39	10	38	7	41	5	33	10
Jan. 1831 ..	47	5	46	9	47	4	38	11
Apr., 1831 ..	48	7	49	0	43	1	47	3
July, 1831 ..	45	7	37	6	48	2	34	0
Oct., 1831 ..	41	1	45	0	45	3	35	8
Jan. 1832 ..	42	4	37	10	41	9	35	3
Apr. 1832 ..	38	3	37	10	43	8	33	4
July, 1832 ..	42	6	39	3	41	2	40	10
Oct., 1831 ..	30	7	28	4	39	5	36	7
Dec., 1832 ..	29	0	29	3	41	0	38	9

3. That it further appears to this House, from the returns of his Majesty' Consuls abroad, that the mean prices of wheat at the following times and places were—

—	Amsterdam.		Rotterdam.		Antwerp.		Havre.		Marseilles.	
	s.	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*
July, 1828.............	30	9	33	4	34	6	50	3	52	0
October, 1828	41	1	54	0	47	10	56	10	60	2
January, 1829	55	0	......		58	10	58	0	63	9
April, 1829	45	8	50	5	55	8	61	10	59	6
July, 1829............	45	11	48	11	52	1	60	6	56	11
Sept. or Oct., 1829....	43	2	41	9	51	1	51	3	58	6
January, 1850	......		......		41	1	44	0	57	10
April, 1830	36	0	36	8	40	0	45	8	61	5
July, 1830............	41	10	43	2	43	10	47	1	58	7
October, 1830	46	9	48	0	51	5	53	0	59	10
January, 1831	41	1	......		54	5	47	5	52	11
April, 1831	47	3	57	9	52	9	49	0	53	3
July, 1831	41	10	51	4	55	2	50	3	51	7
October, 1831	43	2	50	6	57	0	54	6	58	7
January, 1832	43	5	......		48	0	49	0	60	6
April, 1832	38	3	41	4	47	11	52	1	64	3
July, 1832	44	8	41	6	50	6	52	1	......	
October, 1882	39	9	37	3	43	4	51	6	56	10
December, 1832	38	11	40	4	46	6	48	6	57	6

4. That it further appears to this House, that the total quantity of foreign wheat entered for home consumption under the provisions of the 9th George 4th, cap. 60, to the 5th of April, 1833, has been 4,795,746 quarters and one bushel; and that the total amount of duty paid thereon has been 1,604,190*l.* 10*s.* 10*d.*, and that the average rate of such duty is 6*s.* 8¾*d.* per quarter or thereabouts. That, of the aforesaid total quantities, were imported—

	Qrs.	Bush.		per Qr. £.	*s.*	*d.*
In 1829 ..	1,260,633	1,	at an average rate of duty of		9	4
1830 ..	1,494,381	7,	— — —		6	7
1831 ..	1,088,797	3,	— — —		4	9
1832 ..	162,607	7,	— — —	1	3	9

5. That of the total quantity of 4,795,744 quarters, 1 bushel, so entered for home consumption, under the provisions of the 9th George 4th, cap. 60, there were admitted—

	Qrs.	Bush.		*s.*	*d.*	
	1,571,311	5	at a duty of	1	0	per quarter
	1,248,687	2	ditto	2	8	ditto
	564,437	0	ditto	6	8	ditto
	508,217	7	ditto	10	8	ditto
viz.	3,892,653	6	ditto	10	8	ditto, or under.
	903,092	3	ditto	13	8	ditto, or upwd.

6. That it therefore appears the supply of foreign wheat afforded to the people of Great Britain, under the provisions of 9th George 4th, cap. 60, has been at the rate of 1,008,860 quarters per annum, or thereabouts; and that the revenue derived therefrom has been at the rate of 337,479*l.* per annum, or thereabouts.

7. That nothing is more injurious to those classes of the community, which are engaged in the cultivation of the soil, than great and rapid fluctuations in the value of their commodities.

8. That such fluctuations cannot altogether be prevented in the price of an article whose production is necessarily affected by the variations of the seasons; but that it does not appear to that House, that the existing regulations for the trade in foreign corn have succeeded

in diminishing those fluctuations; but on the contrary, they have a tendency to aggravate them, by placing occasional and unnecessary obstacles in the way of a free trade in corn with foreign countries.

9. That any disparity between the price of provisions in one country and another has a tendency to give comparative encouragement to the industry of that country in which the subsistence of man is obtained at the lower rate, and to impose difficulties upon that of the country in which it is obtained at the higher rate.

10. That the price of wheat in Great Britain stands generally at a higher level than in the other countries of Europe, whose inhabitants are engaged in similar pursuits with those of the British empire.

11. That such higher price is in a great measure to be ascribed to the laws which regulate the trade in foreign corn.

12. That the varying scale of duties imposed by the said laws operates frequently as a prohibition upon the import of foreign grain, and consequently upon the export of British commodities.

13. That, therefore, the manifest effects of the Corn Laws are to leave the agricultural interest exposed to all the difficulties which arise from frequent and sudden fluctuations in price—to discourage the export, and consequently production of British commodities—to increase the cost of cultivating the soil and of producing the manufactures of the United Kingdom—to render the industry of the nation less capable of competing with that of other nations—and to make the people less competent to support the several burthens which the various exigences of the State have imposed upon them.

14. That, therefore, it is expedient to devise the said laws and to place them upon a footing more consistent with justice, and more conducive to the welfare of the most important interests of the country.

Having thus put their Lordships in possession of his intentions, he would follow that course which would be most convenient to their Lordships.

The Earl of *Shaftesbury* suggested, that the noble Earl should move that the Resolutions be printed and taken into consideration on a future day.

Earl *Grey* also apprehended, that the course which his noble friend should take would be to submit the Resolutions now to the House, and move that the Debate upon them be hereafter taken. Having said this, he must, however, express his deep regret, that his noble friend should have thought it necessary at this time to bring under consideration a subject of this nature, for one of the greatest evils to which the corn trade was exposed was that of being liable to perpetual change. That trade could not be left too much undisturbed by the Legislature. More than this he would not state on the present occasion. He apprehended the course for his noble friend to take was this, that he would move the Resolutions *pro formâ*; that the Debate be then adjourned, the Resolutions printed, and the Debate be resumed at a future period. Tuesday next had been named by his noble friend, but upon the mere reading of the Resolutions it was obvious, from the variety of statements in them, the returns, and calculations given, that they involved results of the utmost importance, not only as to the agricultural interests, but the general interests of the community; and therefore it would be necessary to examine into the data and principles upon which these Resolutions were founded. He would submit to his noble friend whether it would not be more convenient and more advantageous to postpone the consideration of this important question to a later period than Tuesday next, especially as it was understood it would not be convenient for several noble Lords to be present on that day. He would suggest, that this day fortnight should be taken, if his noble friend did not object to that, or to whatever time was most convenient for their Lordships.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* was exceedingly desirous of affording every accommodation to the House which lay in his power, and he would, therefore, name that day fortnight for resuming the Debate.

The Motion agreed to; Resolutions were ordered to be printed, and taken into further consideration that day fortnight.

LAW COMMISSIONS.] The *Lord Chancellor* moved for a copy of the fourth Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the state of the Common Law. He wished to postpone the Local Courts Bill, which was waiting for a Second Reading, until this Report, which was very important, was laid before their Lordships. In the Bill, as it originally stood, he had extended the jurisdiction of those Courts to the recovery of legacies of limited amount. That provision was now, however, omitted, because he was unwilling to embarrass the measure unnecessarily. He still thought such a provision was necessary, and he might hereafter attend to the subject, but he was persuaded that the Local Courts Bill would be more acceptable without than with a provision for that purpose.

Motion agreed to.

The *Lord Chancellor* also moved for a copy of the third and fourth Reports of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the law of Real Property. In calling for these Reports, he thought that he should be doing the greatest injustice to the indefatigable assiduity and the sound learning which these Commissioners had displayed in the performance of their duty, if he did not state to their Lordships the unanimous opinion of the members of the legal profession in all its branches with respect to them; which opinion was, that no men ever deserved better of the public by their services than those Commissioners did. The first and second Reports had given the utmost satisfaction, and Parliament had already manifested its sense of their excellence, for some of the suggestions contained in those Reports had been acted on, and the present law of the land had been founded on them. He thought it right to add, that for the last year these gentlemen had received no species of remuneration for their services. In the first year a sum was given to them wholly disproportioned to their labours; but these gentlemen, from what he must call a most mistaken and misplaced delicacy, had last year refused to receive any remuneration. Now, every hour which was taken from their professional business and given to the public was actually so much money lost to them. He hoped that their delicacy would not be allowed to inflict an injustice on themselves.

Motion agreed to.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, April, 30, 1833.

Minutes.] Bills. Read a second time:—Tile Duties; Personal Estates; Cotton Duties.

Petitions presented. By Mr. Hughes Hughes, from St. James's, Oxford, against the Assessed Taxes.—By Dr. Lushington, Mr. Alderman Wood, Mr. Phillpotts, Major Beauclerk, Mr. Warburton, Mr. Clay, Mr. T. Attwood, Mr. Hume, Mr. Harvey, Sir O. Mosley, Sir Samuel Whalley, and Mr. Grantley Berkeley, from several Metropolitan Parishes and other Places, to the same effect.

New Writ for Westminster.] Sir *Francis Burdett* said, that in consequence of the painful situation in which his right hon. colleague found himself placed, he had felt it due, as well to his constituents as to himself, to resign his seat for the city of Westminster. His right hon. colleague having accepted office under the present Administration, chiefly with a view and the hope, that he could more efficiently promote the interests of his constituents and the country, found himself placed on the present occasion in such a situation, by the discussion that was fixed for this evening, that he could not, consistent with his official duty and character as a Minister of the Crown, discharge his duty to his constituents; and he felt himself therefore under the painful necessity of resigning his seat. Under these circumstances, he had been requested to move, which he now begged leave to do, for a new writ for the city of Westminster, in the room of the right hon. Sir John Cam Hobhouse, who had accepted the Chiltern Hundreds.

Ordered.

House and Window Taxes.] Sir *John Key* said, that although hon. Members were anxiously awaiting the result of the Motion which he should have the honour of submitting for the consideration of the House, he was glad that a short delay had taken place, as Ministers must now see from the numerous petitions presented, that all parts of the country were impatient of these taxes. He should have been well pleased if some Member of greater talent and experience had undertaken a task, which, in his hands, would be, he feared, but feebly executed. Representing, however, one of the largest districts peculiarly aggrieved by the cruelty and injustice of the House and Window-taxes, he trusted, that in moving for their repeal he should not be accused of vanity and presumption, and that hon. Members would grant him more than usual indulgence while he addressed them on the subject, and not allow the strength of the claims of the industrious classes for redress, to be impaired by the inefficiency with which they were advocated. The House-tax at present in force purported to be assessed, as hon. Members were aware, upon the annual value of all inhabited houses above 10*l.* per annum, upon the following graduated scale:—10*l.* and under 20*l.*, 1*s.* 6*d.* in the pound; 20*l.* and under 40*l.*, 2*s.* 3*d.*; 40*l.* and upwards, 2*s.* 10*d.* It was not necessary for him to enter into an historical account of the rise and progress of this tax, it was sufficient to say, that like most other bad measures, it was, at its first introduction so mild in operation, and so moderate in amount, that it excited but little opposition when first imposed. Together with the Window-tax it amounted to only 2*s*., and thence to 8*s*. each House; and it had gradually progressed to the present period, when its enormous amount exercised a most destructive influence upon trade, and absorbed a large portion of the disposable income of the industrious classes, which, if taxation had been fairly and equally imposed, would have been employed in obtaining those necessaries and comforts, to which, as the main prop and support of the State, they were so well entitled. It was true, these taxes had not attained to their present extravagant amount without the people remonstrating against their injustice and inequality; but the majorities of an unreformed Parliament had been always ready to support the Ministers in placing burthens on the middle classes of society, and an apology was offered for the increase of the rate of the tax in the war in which this country was then engaged, and the people were partially reconciled to the measure by the assurance that it was but temporary, and would expire with the necessity which had called for its imposition. The House-tax, as appeared by the Returns of the House of Commons, produced in the year ending January, 1832, the net amount of 1,357,041*l*. 13*s*. 11¼*d*., of which sum considerably more than half was paid by the city of London and the suburban districts within the bills of mortality, and if added to the metropolis, the hives of industry in the three manufacturing and trading counties, Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Somersetshire, it would be found that united they paid more than three-fourths of the whole tax, for the whole of the fifty-two counties of England and Wales; thus clearly proving that it was a direct tax upon trading and manufacturing industry. It was one of the peculiarities of the inhabited-House tax, as at present imposed, that it offended equally against all the rules to regulate taxation which had been laid down by the advocates of the most opposite theories. With the advocates of direct taxation, it was at war in principle for two reasons—first, because it was almost as expensive in collection as the indirect taxes; and, secondly, because it was equally with them a tax upon consumable commodities, seeing that it fell principally upon tradesmen, who sought to repay themselves for the outlay, by charging the excess of taxation, with their other expenses, upon the commodities in which they dealt, and the price of such commodities was, therefore, necessarily enhanced in their progress to the possession of the consumer, precisely the same as if the amount of the tax was so much money levied on the commodities themselves. To those who saw in indirect imposts the only legitimate source of national revenue, this tax must, upon principle, be equally objectionable; for, although the tax when paid was drawn from trade, and, therefore, indirectly refunded by the consumer of the commodities, and so diffused over a larger surface, yet the tax itself was collected as a money-tax, and thus created all the discontent and dissatisfaction at the Government, which it was supposed to be the vicious tendency of direct taxation to inspire. He was aware that Adam Smith, and other disciples of political economy, had contended, that a tax upon houses was a just tax; and they endeavoured to support their doctrine, sometimes by contending that it was in the nature of a Property-tax, and therefore, defensible upon the recognized principle, that all property should equally pay the State for its protection; at other times they sought to justify the tax, upon the plea that the annual value of a man's residence was a fair criterion of the amount of his means of expenditure, and an *ad valorem* tax upon the surplus disposable income. He humbly contended, that both propositions were equally fallacious, and that the House-tax was not, in principle or in practice, in law or in fact, either a tax upon property, or a tax upon disposable income. That it would be idle to consider this tax in the light of a Property-tax was clear. If it were so it would be calculated upon what Adam Smith denominated "the building rent of the house" that was the interest upon the cost of the materials and labour employed in its construction. If that were the case the present order of things would be completely inverted; the inexpensive dwelling of the humble tradesman would be but lightly taxed; whereas the noble peer and wealthy commoner would have to pay to the State a sum equal to the protection which it afforded to their mansions and castles, the splendid monuments of the surplus wealth of themselves and their progenitors. Adam Smith said, if the House-tax were imposed upon that principle, and applied according to that rule it would ruin half the nobility; for that it was the savings of generations which were expended in the construction of their palaces and mansions. Supposing that would be the consequence of the tax, if equally enforced, let the House reflect how many hundreds of industrious tradesmen had actually been ruined by the extreme severity which was the consequence of its unequal pressure. If noblemen and gentlemen chose to abstract from productive employment the saving of generations, and to invest large masses of wealth, as it were in mortmain, society had no right to complain, for they had a right to do what they would with their own; but society had a right to claim as much in taxes for the protection it afforded to those masses of property, as it demanded for the same quantity of wealth when invested in houses employed for the purposes of trade, or, by its interchanges, contributing to increase the welfare of the whole community. But that it was not intended to treat this tax as one upon property, was manifest from the manner in which it was levied throughout the whole country, unless, indeed, they were to consider all the assessors and Commissioners perjured. For instance, by the oaths of the assessors (as appeared by the returns) there were only four houses in the county of Bedford worth more than 70*l*, per annum; and the aggregate annual value of those four was sworn to be under 1,200*l*. Bedfordshire, be it remembered, contained Woburn-Abbey, Wrest-park, Oakly-house, Warden, Ampthill-place, Hannes-house, Cople-house, Bletsoe-park, Melchburn-park, and a great number of other elegant and commodious houses, the seats of nobility and gentry, each of which, with its rateable appurtenances, was worth many thousands of pounds. If the House-tax were intended to bear the slightest resemblance to a tax upon property, why did all these noble dwelling-houses escape with the annual payment of 170*l*., while the City of London Tavern alone actually paid for taxes, as an inhabited house, 141*l*. 13*s*. 4*d*., although there were not in the whole house apartments in which the proprietors and the family ever slept, the whole being devoted to trade, in which, indeed, its whole value consisted? In Cheapside, the Poultry, and Cornhill, it appeared, by the returns to Parliament, 100 houses, indiscriminately taken, were assessed at the sum of 16,300*l*., or upwards of 160*l*. each, upon an average; yet, except in the metropolitan and manufacturing counties, there was not, in the remaining portions of England and Wales, an equal number of houses assessed to the same amount, although, upon a moderate calculation, drawn from the topographical and historical accounts of the counties of England and Wales, and other sources of information, there could not be less than 7,000 or 8,000 mansions and dwelling-houses, which had cost from 2,000*l*. to 200,000*l*. in their erection. The average cost of the houses in Cornhill and Cheapside might be 1,500*l*. to 2,000*l*.; what then constituted the difference between the cost of the property and the value at which it was assessed, but the trade carried on in them? And it was manifest that a tax which fastened with such relentless severity upon the latter description of houses, was not a tax upon property, but upon trade and industry. The next position he had to combat was the assertion that the amount of house rents was a criterion of the amount of a man's disposable income, or the amount which he had to expend in the consumable commodities. Dr. Smith, in one part of his "Inquiry into the Causes of the Wealth of Nations," seemed to justify the opinion, but then he was alluding to cases where income and rents were drawn from other sources than trade, for he spoke of houses used for the purposes of trade as a sort of instrument of trade, not to be considered in the same light as mere dwelling-houses; but, under the law, as it now existed, the great mass of this species of taxation was derived from that description of house which he truly designated the instrument of trade, and the source of gainful occupation; and, although, the modification proposed by the noble Lord (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) afforded a trifling relief to one class of the persons aggrieved (the shopkeepers), it did not at all remove the objectionable principle of the tax itself. The fact was, the highly-taxed houses were the residences of the producers, and the low-taxed houses the residences of the consumers. It was this which created the fictitious value of houses over and above the building-rent. It was the competition of industry, of which trading towns and cities were the theatre. The tradesman, the mechanic, the merchant, who were all the creators and producers of wealth, must live where they could, the mere consumers might live where they pleased. For the mansions of the rich and great there was but small competition. The possessors of incomes equal to their habitation had not only the untaxed counties of England and Wales to select for places of residence, but Paris, Rome, Naples, Florence, Brussels, became the homes of their adoption; while their incomes, spent amongst strangers, continued to be drawn from this country, which its overtaxed tradespeople, labourers, and manufacturers were toiling to produce. It was not to be supposed, as the noble Lord seemed to imagine, that mere shops and warehouses were the only houses which, in the language of Adam Smith, before quoted, were the instruments of trade. No, the numberless houses, of all sorts and sizes, which were adjacent to the shopkeeping part of the community, were equally houses used for the purposes of trade; the proprietors of many, perhaps most of them, resorted daily to the more crowded parts of London, in the pursuit of their means of subsistence. It was almost impossible for persons, with a due regard to the health of themselves and families, to bear the close confinement of the more densely populated parts of the metropolis—merchants, tradesmen, clerks, shopmen, porters, workmen, warehousemen, all pressed from the scenes of their daily toil to the suburbs of the metropolis, to obtain, in a pure atmosphere, relief by healthful relaxation from the penalties which waited upon laborious and unhealthy employments in close and confined situations. The relief proposed to be granted by the noble Lord to the shopkeeping inhabitants of towns and cities was a mere delusion. The proportion of the number of shop-windows to the remaining number of the windows of the House bore no relation to the difference of the annual value of those Houses, which value was constituted by their trading advantages and local situation. The gross injustice which pressed upon the London Tavern in the manner he had before mentioned, and on houses similarly situated, would be in no way redressed by the noble Lord's modification, and the relief of the shopkeepers would only be as one to ten, while the injustice they suffered from the tax, as compared with the now producing part of the community, was as ten to one. If the shop-keepers were, as the noble Lord seemed to consider, the only producers in towns and cities who ought to be relieved from the burthen, the supposed plan would fail to give even them redress. The windows of the shops were generally on the ground floor, and contributed, perhaps, only one quarter of the whole number, while the value of the shop constituted three-quarters of its annual rent, and yet, the fallacious criterion of shop-windows was to be made the standard of relief. He would ask his Lordship whether merchants and merchants' clerks, ship insurance, and produce brokers, tavern and victualling-house keepers, schoolmasters, professional men, lodging-house keepers, mechanics, artisans, and clerks, who were crowded together in the almost numberless streets of private residences, and in and about the metropolis, were not compelled to pay high rents by the necessity of being, for the purposes of trade and industry, in crowded towns and cities; and whether they were not as much producers of wealth and entitled to relief as the shop-keepers of the kingdom? The noble Lord, perhaps, thought that by holding out the prospect of redress (very partial it was true) he should derive advantage from the old maxim "Divide and conquer," and that the shopkeepers would be satisfied, by the selfish motive of individual gain, to leave their fellow-sufferers in the lurch. The noble Lord would find himself mistaken—the housekeepers throughout the kingdom would unite as one man. They objected to the House and Window-tax as unjust in principle, oppressive in detail, inquisitorial and vexatious in its imposition and collection, and that it was susceptible of no modification which would take away its objectionable character; and they would never cease to complain till it was entirely repealed. Hoping that he had established, in the opinion of the House, the two propositions, that the House-tax was not an equal Property-tax, and that it was not an equal tax upon disposable income, he might, perhaps, be called upon to say what it was. He denominated it an unfair and unjust tax upon the industry of the country; it was an Income-tax in its most odious form, because it touched not the masses of wealth—it touched not the drones in the hive—it fixed with relentless severity upon the industrious orders. The Income-tax, which was a mere tax upon income, and justly excited so much displeasure, was a heavenly tax, compared with this. If it did tax a man's income derived from trade, it was only in common with incomes derived from other sources, and in the calculations of that income it made an allowance for the expenses of his trade. The House-tax not only taxed income obtained by means of trade in an enormously-disproportionate degree, but it positively taxed the houses—the very instrument, the expensive instrument, by which that income was created, and the means from which it was derived. The tax-gatherer made no allowance for the depression of trade. It was in vain the tradesman spoke of his bad debts, of his reduced rate of profit, of his diminished business; the tax-gatherer replied, that he lived in the house, and whether he was prosperous or unprosperous, whether he thrived or was ruined, the taxes must be paid. Beneath the reckless grasp of the tax-gatherer first fell the profits of the tradesman, then the rewards of his labour and industry, then his capital, then his credit, till bankruptcy closed his career. The goods of his creditors then went to meet the demands of the tax-gatherer; and if they were insufficient, a gaol was his portion, as a bankruptcy which answered all other claims was no protection to the demand of this tax. Of the Window-tax it was not necessary for him to say so much: it was subject (though not in the same degree) to a greater portion of the reasoning he had taken the liberty of applying to the tax upon houses; and, in addition to those arguments, its injurious effects upon the health and the comforts of the people must be manifest to any one who considered the question. The Window-tax was, and ever had been an odious tax, intercepting in their progress to man two of Heaven's greatest blessings—light and air; the free use of which were indispensable to the healthful and comfortable enjoyments of the other blessings of life. The progressive increase of this tax had prevented its ill consequences from forcibly intruding themselves on the public notice. In many parts of the metropolis, in those old houses, which had been converted into separate tenements for the poor, the closing of windows for the purpose of avoiding taxes had been carried on to an extent most injurious to the health and cleanliness of the inmates. This tax had so long continued that it had become, as it were, a chronic evil; but it demanded no less a cure on that account. The people finding they could not extend the laws to meet their comforts, had circumscribed their comforts to meet the law. Builders had, in fact, built houses according to the Window-tax Act, and every contrivance that ingenuity could suggest, had been resorted to in the construction of the houses, to curtail the use of glass, at the expense of the health and convenience of their inmates. There had been, he understood, two objections raised to the repeal of the House and Window-taxes—first, that the collection of the remainder of the Assessed-taxes, which were now under the management of the Tax Board, would be attended with a considerable increase of proportionate expense; and, secondly, that, without the sum these taxes produced, the necessary expenditure of the State could not be maintained. His answer to these statements would be, that the relative expense of collecting the Assessed-taxes was (considered as a direct tax (most exorbitant—it being 5*l.* 7*s.* 7*d.* per cent; while the cost of collection, even of the indirect taxes, the Customs, and Excise, the mean is only 6*l.* 6*s.* 4½*d.*; whereas the cost of collecting the Stamp revenue was but 2*l.* 9*s.* 10*d.* per cent. If the House would consent to abolish the House and Window-tax, the Board of Taxes might at once be broken up, and the whole army of Commissioners, Assessors, surchargers, collectors, window-peepers, spies, and informers, might be swept away. The Land-tax, which was a tax imposed on districts, might, like County-rates and Police-tax in the metropolitan districts, be assessed upon parishes, and collected at a trifling expense along with the parochial rates by the proper authorities; and such of the other Assessed-taxes as it might be necessary to retain, might be easily transferred to the Stamp Department, and collected at the lowest rate of charges. There could be no more difficulty or hardship in a gentleman obtaining a license to use a carriage or other taxable article of luxury, than in a tradesman obtaining a license, to act as an auctioneer, or in any other capacity. In reference to the second objection, the inability of Ministers to do without the tax, he could only reply, that he scarcely ever knew a proposition to reduce taxation that was not met by the same argument.

The repeal of the House and Window-tax would not, however, permanently deprive the revenue of anything like its nominal amount; in the first place, 280,000*l.* per annum, the cost of its collection, would be saved to the country; in the next place, as the greater part of the amount of these taxes was taken from the small means of the middle classes, they would have something more to spend in obtaining for themselves the necessaries and comforts of life; of those, the larger portion were taxed commodities, and the increased consumption by the portion of income thus liberated would cause an increase of revenue in its other branches—tea, coffee, sugar, tobacco, beer, and other articles of domestic use. The repeal of these taxes would also give a spur to industry, and lead to an increased consumption of bricks, timber, and particularly of glass, and other materials used in building. He thanked the House for the patient hearing they had granted him, and concluded by again expressing his opinion, in which he trusted the House would coincide with him, that the taxes upon houses and windows were unequal, impolitic, and unjust. They depressed trade, fettered industry—they were subject to every objection which applied to every tax, without possessing the advantages of any, and for that reason he would move, "That such portion of the Assessed-taxes as related to the House and Window-tax be repealed."

Mr. Alderman *Wood* rose to second the Motion. He adverted to the large number of persons who were interested in the repeal of these taxes, and to whom (the shopkeepers especially), in consequence of the great distress which prevailed among them it would prove a most seasonable relief. At the deputation which had been before alluded to, the noble Lord (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) had been told, that in a very public situation, one shopkeeper out of every three had either become bankrupt or insolvent, or had compounded with his creditors. Indeed the records of the Courts of Bankruptcy and Insolvency would give but a very inadequate idea of the distress which existed amongst tradesmen; for, in consequence of the manner in which these Courts were regulated, large numbers preferred compounding to applying there for relief. It had been said, that this tax would be a relief principally to landlords. That was, in his opinion, a strange doctrine, for the fact was, that most shopkeepers, and many housekeepers, were their own landlords—at least for a limited time—viz., during the period of their leases. The measure respecting shop-windows proposed by the noble Lord was most unsatisfactory; he had letters from vast numbers of tradesmen in London and Westminster, stating, that they regarded it as illusory, and would rather forego it for the repeal of some other tax, hoping, from the strong public expression of feeling against the House and Window-taxes, that the day would shortly arrive when they must be totally repealed. It seemed, however, that they came to the discussion of the question this evening under peculiar circumstances. The vote of the Gentlemen of the landed interest was mixed up with the Malt-tax and the Property-tax; and he had some little alarm that some persons might change their minds. If they did so, he thought it would be a most extraordinary proceeding on the part of the Representatives of the people. How those Gentlemen could appear before their constituents he could not imagine. He knew, for his own part, that his position would not be a little singular if one night he voted for the reduction of a tax, and a few nights afterwards voted for its continuance. [An *Hon. Member:* But you are pledged]. The hon. member for Yorkshire, who said he was pledged, was certainly mistaken; he was pledged to nothing, but his opinion had always been decidedly against the House and Window-taxes. It had been said, that a reduction of these taxes would prevent the Ministers from carrying on the Government efficiently without some substitute were provided. He admitted it; but he would press upon the attention of the Members of that House, that it was their duty, and the duty of all men of property, to come forward and sacrifice some portion of that property for the protection it received from Government. He saw no objection to taking off the duty on every excisable article, except spirits and tobacco, and to raising every shilling required by means of a Property-tax. Hon. Members might, perhaps, ask him how he would make up 30,000,000*l.* of taxes? He could do it very easily. He would take only one per cent on the property of the country ["*oh! oh!*" *and a laugh*]. This might, perhaps, stagger hon. Gentlemen, but on fair calculation, the property of the country, movable, and immovable, amounted to 3,000,000,000*l.*, and a tax of one per cent upon that would produce 30,000,000*l.* Much was said about the hardship of taxing the fundholder; but it should be remembered that there were many Gentlemen, some of whom were then present, who had purchased into the funds at forty-six, and who now held them at eighty-six. Their property had been increased at the public expense, and he saw no reason why they should not be called upon to give some of it back for the public service. He concluded by seconding the Motion, and entreating the House to persevere in the reduction of the Malt-duty.

Lord *Althorp* said, the proposition with which I shall have the honour of concluding, is certainly one of a very extraordinary nature—and one which I admit is liable to great objections. I, therefore, feel it necessary, before I enter into the consideration of the substance of the Resolution which I shall move, to explain to the House the circumstances of this case, and to state the reasons on which I feel myself compelled to take the course which I feel it my duty to take on the present occasion. The division which took place on Friday last, I am not going to call a complete surprise upon the House. Notice was certainly on the books that such a proposition would be brought forward; but Gentlemen must recollect, that for the evening in question, there were four notices on the Order Book; and every Gentleman acquainted with the forms of the House, must know, that on the question of going into a Committee of Supply, only two Motions can be made — one on the Order of the Day, and the other on the question, that the Speaker do leave the Chair. Therefore, I myself did not expect the Motion of my hon. friend, the member for Lincolnshire, would have been brought forward that evening. One of the Motions which preceded it, that of the hon. member for Oldham—went off in consequence of his not having given notice in the proper form. The hon. and learned member for Dublin (Mr. O'Connell) withdrew his Motion, and for that reason the Motion of the hon. member for Lincolnshire came on. The number of Members in the House when the question was decided, did not amount to one-half of the whole number. The Motion was supported by several Gentlemen on very different grounds. For these reasons I do not think the division which took place on that question, would justify the Government in taking the new and decisive line of policy indicated by the division on that question. It would not justify the Ministers in changing the whole financial policy of the country, nor if they were disinclined to make such a change, would it justify them in considering the decision of the House against them, and consequently as one which called upon them to make room for others who were inclined to follow the course which would be necessary, if the successful Motion of the hon. member for Lincolnshire were carried into effect. On these grounds I feel that the Government is placed in a situation of great embarrassment, for I admit, as I have already stated, that it is very objectionable to make such a proposition as that which I feel myself bound to submit to the House, and which is one that, in a certain degree, does call upon the House to rescind and alter that vote which it so lately came to. As I have no choice however but between difficulties, I feel it my duty to bring the question anew under the notice of the House, now that hon. Gentlemen are fully aware of the circumstances, in order to leave to them the choice of the alternative. It is necessary that the House should be aware of, and take into due consideration, the alternative presented to it in consequence of the vote the other evening. I stated, in the debate on the former occasion, and I did not state it hastily, that I did not think it of very great consequence whether the proposition of my hon. friend was for a reduction of half the duty, or of the whole. I am certainly prepared to say, that it is absolutely necessary, if either proposition be carried, that a substitution of other taxation should take place, and that it would be a wiser course, under such circumstances, for the House to take off the whole of the Malt-tax. With the same views I look at the question proposed by the hon. Baronet to-night. I think it must be evident to the House that it is utterly impossible, in fair justice to the inhabitants of this country, to give so large a relief to one class of the community, without also giving a large relief to another class. Therefore, I do think, that if the House perseveres in the reduction of the Malt-tax, it will be its duty to take into favourable consideration, and, in point of fact, to adopt the proposition of the hon. Baronet. This must necessarily produce a complete alteration in our financial system. I do not see how it is possible for any Gentleman to adopt this proposition, without being prepared to vote for a Property-tax. The worthy Alderman who spoke last expressed his readiness to adopt this alternative. Now, I think the House ought to have this fairly placed before them. Members ought to consider what the alternative is, and whether it is one which, in their prudence and discretion, they think it advisable to adopt. I do not think it would be prudent to have a very small Property-tax. If the system is to be adopted at all, it ought to be adopted as a system, and on a sufficiently extensive scale to allow of extinguishing several minor taxes. It would be desirable, in the situation in which this country is placed, never to raise less than 10,000,000*l.* or 12,000,000*l.* by a Property-tax, to be imposed as a substitute for other taxes. This, it is quite clear, must be a Property-tax applying generally, as stated in my Resolution. Now, I am not prepared to argue this question as to whether it would be politic or not to impose such a tax. At present, I simply say, that it would be inexpedient. But it certainly would be impolitic to propose such a tax unless it were extended to the whole of the United Kingdom. As I said before, I am not arguing on the policy of the measure; but I must say I do not think it would be politic. Now, Sir, what is this tax which at the present moment is so extremely popular? There are many hon. Members in this House who remember the last Property-tax; there are, perhaps, also many who do not recollect the feeling which then existed in the country on this subject. Speaking, however, from my own experience, I do not remember any tax that ever existed so unpopular as the Property-tax in 1816, the repeal of which was received with universal acclamation. Why, therefore, are we to suppose that it would be more popular now than it was then? Gentlemen talk of modifications and changes; but if it be intended to raise by it a large sum of money as a substitute for a large portion of taxation, it is impossible that it should not bear on every class of the community—it is impossible to lay it on one class, and exempt another. I say this would be the grossest injustice. I have heard Gentlemen speak of laying a Property-tax only on capital invested—as rent, interest of money, mortgages, annuities, &c., and leaving productive capital, or capital engaged in manufactures, exempt. But I ask hon. Gentlemen to consider what would be the effect of this? I ask them to consider the number of persons there are of small incomes of this description. Let them figure to themselves a small fundholder living in the neighbourhood of a great manufacturer; what would be his feelings at finding himself taxed by a Property-tax, and yet beholding his wealthy neighbour exempt. It is utterly impossible that this House, or any Legislature, can seriously adopt such a proposition as this, or commit such an act of injustice. It is absolutely necessary that the property of all classes of people in this country should be taxed, or none at all. How far, then, would this differ from the Property-tax of 1816, which every Gentleman who recollects it must remember to have been one of the most unpopular taxes that ever was imposed? If inquisitorial powers are spoken of, where will you find inquisitorial powers greater than those which were then exercised? That tax was most objectionable on account of the injustice and fraud to which it gave rise, and the false returns which were constantly made —and it was consequently detested by the whole country. The hon. member for Bridport, the other evening, stated, that seeing the objections to a Property-tax, he was prepared to adopt an Income-tax, and he argued certainly very ingeniously, and admitting his premises, very conclusively, that an Income-tax might be made an equal tax—for supposing a man to have an annuity of 100*l.* for ten years, he would, if an Income-tax was imposed, pay it only for ten years, whilst the man, who had a pepetual annuity of 100*l.* would pay it in perpetuity. But does my hon. friend propose that this tax should be a perpetual tax, or does he suppose that it would be a perpetual one—to say nothing of putting on a tax which for many years, at least, would be an unjust tax, on the ground that length of time would finally make it equal? I am convinced that such a measure as this would be extremely unpopular, and I am perfectly satisfied, that before this tax had been in operation one or two years, the Table of the House would be loaded with petitions for its repeal. What, in such a case as that, would be the situation of this country? You would have repealed a large amount of taxation, and have rested the revenue of the country on a system of taxation which you could not maintain; and then I would ask what would be your situation? I must say, that to rest the financial resources of the country, or so large a portion of them, upon such a tax, would be extremely dangerous. I have stated generally my views of a Property-tax. I do not mean to deny, that there is nothing in theory more equitable, or that in practice would be more just, than that every man should be taxed according to the utmost of his property for the protection afforded him by Government. If any such proposition could be brought forward—if any proposition that would ensure such perfection could be framed—I am ready to admit, that it would be a proposition worthy the attention of this House. But, up to the present moment, no such proposition has been submitted to us, and consequently I see nothing of which I can approve as a substitute for the taxes it is proposed to repeal. Under these circumstances, I certainly do feel, that I should not be justified in making such a proposition to the House, or in supporting it if made by others. Under these views, I have framed the Motion which I now submit to the House. I wish to state what that Motion actually means. It means this—to take the opinion of the House on the question that this large reduction proposed in taxation cannot take place without the substitution of a Property-tax; it also means to call on the House to state, that at present such a substitution would be inexpedient. I do not ask the House to pledge itself, or any Member to pledge himself further than this—that at the present time we are not prepared to enter into this question. At the present time I am prepared to state, that his Majesty's Government, as it at present exists and is constituted, whatever may be the opinion of some individuals, could not and would not come forward with such a proposition. I know it has been held by many Gentlemen, that in consequence of the Reform in Parliament, Ministers, are to follow the directions of the House of Commons as to the course of policy which they are to pursue, more especially in financial affairs. Now, I am perfectly ready to admit this doctrine, that Ministers, taking them in the abstract, are bound to follow the orders of the House; but I do not think, that as an individual Minister, I am under any such obligation. From the manner in which I have worded my Resolution, I am sensible that I have united many parties against me. I admit that I have united against me all those who are in favour of a Property-tax—I have united all who are in favour of a repeal of the Malt-tax—and all who are in favour of the Motion of the hon. Baronet—with some of those who are of opinion, that there might be a larger reduction of taxation without any substitution whatever. Perhaps it may be thought that I have acted improperly in pursuing a plan which had united so many parties against me; but it is clear that all those who will so unite in voting against me must disapprove of the policy which I have adopted with respect to the finances of the country; and if it should appear by the result of this evening's discussion, that a majority of the House agreed in voting against my proposition, that Majority will have expressed its disapprobation of my financial plans; and I should certainly not, in such a case, consider myself fit to remain Chancellor of the Exchequer. My case is hardly susceptible of proof, for it is almost self-evident, that it is impossible to enable the Government to adopt the proposition of the hon. Baronet without some substitution. Now, no suggestion has hitherto been made of any substitute for the tax which the Resolution of Friday night went to repeal, with the exception of a Property-tax; and I am sure that any one who looks at the state of our taxation at the present moment, must agree that no other plan could possibly be adopted. The arguments against the imposition of a Property-tax are therefore arguments against the proposition of the hon. Baronet. I admit that these direct taxes give occasion to great vexations; but the proposition of the hon. Baronet is not to do away with a direct tax, and substitute an indirect tax for it, but to substitute one direct tax for another. I grant that to have the tax-gatherer come round and raise a sum in a direct way, is by no means a popular mode of meeting the exigences of the State, and that such taxes are calculated to produce great dissatisfaction; but I do not think, that the House and Window-tax is quite so bad as has been represented by the hon. Baronet. The hon. Baronet says, that the principle of taxing a house according to the rent which it produces, and not according to the cost of building it, is inconsistent. If you estimate a man's property by what he has formerly spent instead of what he at present has it in his power to spend, the proposition of the hon. Baronet is certainly correct; but, I cannot see what proof it is of the wealth of any individual, that he has already laid out an enormous sum in the building of a house. I admit the difficulty of ascertaining precisely the yearly value of a house; but I think, if it be fairly assessed, that the yearly value affords a tolerably good test of the power of consumption of the person who occupies it. The hon. Baronet has also spoken of the great expense of the collection of these taxes. Now, it so happens, that with the exception of the Stamp Duties, the expense of collecting the Assessed Taxes is the lowest of all the four great divisions into which our taxation may be divided—the Customs, the Excise, Stamps, and the Assessed Taxes. The expense of collecting the last is certainly very considerable; but it is less than that of the Customs and the Excise, and only greater than that of the Stamp Duties. I may now be allowed to make some observations (and indeed it would be wrong if I were not to do so) with regard to the proposition for granting a certain degree of relief to shopkeepers, which I brought forward on a former occasion. Two objections have been made to this course of proceeding. The first is, that the relief will be but trifling; the second is, that it will operate as a relief only to the larger shop-keepers, and will be of no benefit whatever to the smaller. I have considered these objections, and I think that the latter has considerable force. I think that the objections may be obviated, with respect to the windows, by not deducting three or any particular number of windows which the shop may have; but, by enacting, that in all houses having shops attached to them, one half of the duty on all the windows of the House shall be taken off. That is simpler than my original plan, and will be less difficult to carry into effect; and it will relieve the large and the small shopkeepers in equal proportions, without a much greater sacrifice of revenue than I at first estimated. I have now stated the grounds on which I make my present proposition to the House. I confess that I feel great regret in finding myself in a situation in which I am compelled to appeal again to the consideration of the House, on a point respecting which they have already come to a vote, and to propose that it should reconsider the decision which it came to; but, as I said before, it does appear to me that, under the circumstances which accompanied the adoption of that decision, it would not be justifiable in his Majesty's Ministers to consider it as the final expression of the opinion of the House, respecting the course which ought to be pursued; and they did not feel justified in acting upon that decision. I have felt it my duty, therefore, however disagreeable to me—however embarrassing to the House—to give them an opportunity of reconsidering their decision. I will not detain the House further, than to move, in place of the hon. Baronet's Motion—"That the deficiency in the Revenue, which would be occasioned by a reduction of the Tax on Malt to 10*s.* the quarter, and by the repeal of the Tax on Houses and Windows, could only be supplied by the substitution of a general tax on Property and Income, and an extensive change in our whole financial system, which would at present be inexpedient."

Mr. *Hume* said, that, differing as he did in opinion from the noble Lord, he hoped the House would allow him to detain them for a very short time, while he endeavoured to show them that the deficiency which would arise from the repeal of the taxes in question could be made up, without adopting the expedient pointed out by the noble Lord. No one was more anxious than he was, to maintain the credit of the country. He hoped, therefore, that it would not be supposed that anything which he should propose was intended to hurt the public creditor; for that anything which could have that effect would inflict a great evil on the country. The noble Lord considered that the deficiency could be made good in no way but by a Property and Income-tax. With respect to the Income-tax, it had been disagreeable and unpopular, more among the higher classes than among the lower. There was great reason to believe that the great outcry which in that House was raised against the tax, proceeded principally from the higher classes. There was no doubt that the measures necessary for enforcing it were rather inquisitorial; but in what direct tax was the case otherwise, and could the tax on windows be considered less inquisitorial? The duty of the House was to decide which of the taxes was least vexatious in its operation. The great fault which had hitherto been committed in the system of taxation in this country, was, that it had been applied to the capital which was employed in manufactures, in occupying the labouring population, while the landed property had been in a great measure exempted from those burthens which fell almost exclusively on the middle classes. If that were the case, which he thought he could prove, the question now was, how to equalize the burthens of all classes—how to bring about an equitable and fair system for the community at large? The noble Lord said, the amount of money which would be required to make up for the reduction, was too great to admit of the repeal of the taxes proposed. The taxes now before the House amounted to 2,500,000*l.*; those on malt were 2,400,000*l.* Thus the whole yearly value was 4,900,000*l.* to be repealed. But, in his opinion, the repeal would not produce nearly so great a deficiency as that; and, in the case of malt, he had no doubt that the increased consumption would diminish the deficiency by at least 1,000,000*l.*, leaving them only a deficiency of 3,900,000*l.* If any doubt were entertained upon the subject, he thought he could satisfy the House by referring to several instances in which the diminution of a duty had had the effect of increasing the revenue. He held in his hand a statement, collected from papers which had been laid before the House, which showed, that whenever an attempt had been made to reduce taxation, to alter the duties on any article of general consumption, the result had invariably been such an increase of that consumption, that the revenue had in many cases been augmented. They had had the advantage of many years' experience on this point, and almost every reduction of taxation had confirmed the doctrines he had just stated. This had been the case with respect to tea—with respect to spirits—with respect to malt itself. In almost every article it would be found, that the amount of the whole duty collected was increased when the tax was diminished. With respect to wine, it appeared, from the accounts laid before the House, that from the time the increased duty was laid on that article, both in this country and in Ireland, the consumption and the revenue derived from it had diminished, till it was only one-fourth of the amount which the duty produced; therefore a great portion of the people were deprived of that luxury. In proportion as the tax was increased, in the same proportion had the consumption decreased. He would call the attention of the House also to another point in the paper which he held in his hand, and that was, the effect of the diminution of the duty upon spirits. It appeared that the duty on spirits had been altered at two different periods. In England, during the year 1827, the duty was altered from 12*s.* to 7*s.* per gallon. What was the result? The President of the Board of Trade was not right in the observations which he had made, deduced from facts relative to one particular year, which he contended was unfairly chosen, being inferior in consumption to the twenty years preceding. He would not follow the example of the right hon. Gentleman, but would compare the three years previous to the diminution of the duty with the three years following it. In 1824, 1825, and 1826—the three years preceding the diminution of the duty—the amount of the revenue derived from that tax averaged 2,890,000*l.*; in the three years following the diminution of the duty, it amounted to 3,760,000*l.*; thus exhibiting an increase of revenue of 870,000*l.* with the diminished duty. With respect to Ireland, in the three years after the diminution of the tax, the amount of the revenue had exactly doubled. In the case of Scotland, the facts were still more remarkable, because the reduction was on a still larger scale. Instead of being reduced from 12*s.* to 7*s.*, it was a reduction from 6*s.* 2*d.* to 2*s.* 4*d.* It was true, that the duty was subsequently raised to 2*s.* 10*d.* Still that was a reduction of more than half, it having been reduced at first nearly two thirds. The consequence was, that the number of gallons distilled increased from 2,739,000, in 1821, 1822, 1823; to 7,595,000*l.*, in 1825, 1826, and 1827; the duty amounted to above 1,000,000*l.* sterling. The duty in the three years preceding the decrease of the tax, produced a revenue of 913,600*l.* In the next three years, it was 1,294,000*l.*, being an increase of nearly fifty per cent. Smuggling had been almost entirely detroyed. Might they not consider this as a fair example of what was likely to take place in the case of the reduction of the duty on malt? In the three years before 1785, as many bushels of malt paid duty as for the last ten years; and the consequence was, that, while the tax had been increased sixty-five per cent., the whole amount of the revenue obtained from it had only increased fifteen per cent.; thus leaving a decrease of fifty per cent., in consequence of the increase of the duty; and it must be borne in mind, that 20*s*. 8*d*. was not the whole amount of the duty during all the period to which he had referred. It had at one time been 31*s*.; but the result had always proved the accuracy of his reasoning, because an increase of taxation had constantly produced a decrease of consumption, and decrease of taxation had led invariably to an increase of consumption. One great evil arising from the continuation of the Malt-duties was, that the population of the country were drawn to the use of ardent spirits, which could not but be considered exceedingly injurious. He said, then, that it might be expected that instead of a loss of 2,400,000*l*. from the reduction of the Malt-duty, there would be only 1,200,000*l*., or rather, if the precedents to which he had referred might be relied upon, there would be only 900,000*l*. to make up. The Vice-President of the Board of Trade had cited the example of the increased consumption of sugar from 1814 to the present time; but the change in the price of that article had been such that it was scarcely fair to make the comparison. With regard to tobacco he would state only one example. In Ireland, when the duty was 5½*d*., there were more pounds of tobacco entered forty-five years ago than there were now. It was not that there was less smoking now, but there was more smuggling. Thus, in addition to the loss of the revenue, high duties drove people into violations of the law. The right hon. Gentleman had stated the consumption of tobacco in the United Kingdom as having increased from 15,000,000 in the year 1814, to 30,000,000 in 1832. But the right hon. Gentleman would excuse him if he said, that a more unfair comparison was never made; because in the ten years before and the ten years after 1814, no one year exhibited so small a consumption by 4,000,000 as that year. He thought this was misleading the House; and if the proper papers were in the hands of Members, as he hoped they would soon be, no such attempt as this could again be made to impose upon the House. But he would now come to the article of sugar. It would be found, that as the amount of duty was diminished (provided of course that there was an open market), the consumption of sugar increased. The right hon. Gentleman had stated, that the consumption had increased from 6,000,000 to 22,000,000; but he ought to have told the House, that the 6,000,000 had paid a duty of 1*s*., while the 22,000,000 paid only 6*d*. He could cite pepper and other articles, as instances in which similar results were to be found. He felt, therefore, that he was warranted in calculating that the increase of the consumption of malt would give 1,000,000*l*. This would bring down the deficiency to 3,900,000*l*., from which he was to deduct half a million, or 600,000*l*. now on hand, leaving a balance of 3,300,000*l*. to be provided for; and if a tax were wanted for that, he would place real property upon the same footing as personal property, rather than impose an income tax, which was of so inquisitorial a nature. As personal property paid upon its descent a tax of 1,000,000*l*., or 1,500,000*l*., he would put a tax of 2,000,000*l*., if it were necessary, upon the descent of real property, and that would leave only 1,300,000*l*. to be provided for. But then it should be considered what could be done in the way of reduction of expenditure. We raised taxes to the amount of 50,000,000*l*. annually; we paid 28,000,000*l*. for the interest of the National Debt, and then there were 22,000,000*l*. to carry on the Government of the country. Now he thought there could be little difficulty in saving 1,300,000*l*. or twice that sum, out of those 22,000,000*l*., if proper efforts were made. He would permit the Civil List to remain, but he said, that the pensions which were charged either upon it or upon the consolidated fund were fairly open to revision and examination. The list of pensions and superannuations would admit of very great curtailment. He was satisfied it could be proved, that many persons were receiving pensions for two or three, and some for four situations, and surely, in the present difficulties of the country, these extravagant grants ought to be reduced. He did not consider that, because any Ministers had chosen to give to particular favourites 500*l*. or 1,000*l*. a-year, or to make compromises without consulting

Parliament, the House of Commons ought to sanction those gifts at the public expense. The time was now come when it was their duty to weigh each case upon its own merits, and if any individuals had improperly received the public money, it was not too late to put a stop to it. There were nearly 4,000,000*l*. laid out in collecting the revenue, although the whole cost up to 1797, and that under a very bad system, did not exceed 1,100,000*l*. It was strange, that with all the experience we had acquired, we could not make the collection for less than three millions and a half, or 4,000,000*l*. It appeared to him that it would be very easy, out of the 22,000,000*l*., to save twelve per cent., so that almost the whole of the expected deficiency might be made good by reduction of expenditure, without any tax upon real property. But the reductions must be made upon a different principle from that upon which the various Governments of the country had hitherto proceeded. The saving could not be effected while we had colonies to drain us of thousands and tens of thousands every year, or while we went on building forts, which were not necessary for the protection of those colonies. It was most ridiculous to force upon Upper and Lower Canada, and Nova Scotia, against the inclination of the inhabitants, a larger military establishment than was kept up in the whole of the United States, where there were 14,000,000 of people to be protected. Let the House appoint a Committee to go item by item through the public accounts, and he would pledge himself that they would point out the means of saving the whole deficiency of 1,300,000*l*. It was not to be done by such a plan as that of the hon. member for Birmingham, who had proposed sending 2,000 artillerymen to Constantinople, and, of course, some 30,000 infantry to protect them. This country ought to avoid interference with the Continent altogether; and in this way he thought the reduction could be supplied; but if not, let them put personal and real property on the same footing. They ought to take off the duty on every species of raw material; on all means of conveyance, on railways, roads, and every means of communication; for roads had been aptly compared to the arteries of the human body. These points, however, would be subjects for future consideration. If the noble Lord should be able to carry the House along with him, and if the House should unfortunately affirm the noble Lord's proposition, he (Mr. Hume) should be disposed to take the sense of the House again respecting it, when it should be put as the main question. He hoped the House would act upon the same principle as Ministers had acted at the India House, when the Directors said they could not carry on the government of India without money. Ah! (said the President of the Board of Control), we will cut off the money, and you will then be forced to be economical. He sincerely hoped the House would not think of denying the vote which had been agreed to on Friday night. For his own part, he did not regret the conclusions he had arrived at, or the course he had pursued. That course, under similar circumstances, he should in no wise depart from. He felt satisfied of the necessity of a little gentle pressure on his Majesty's Ministers on these subjects. How was it, that what was good with them when on his side of the House was bad with them on the Ministerial side? He trusted, however, the House would consider it was not the fault of Ministers alone, but that they had to contend against a system, the whole machinery of which was of the most complex and pernicious character. They, however, must determine to cut off every useless branch of the national expenditure. This, he well knew, could be done to the extent of 5,000,000*l*., by strict economy and good management, without in the slightest degree impairing the efficiency of our necessary national establishments. Under the circumstances, he should support the Motion of the hon. Baronet, the member for London, and at the proper time, if the Amendment of the noble Lord the Chancellor of the Exchequer was lost, he should propose a Resolution to the effect, "that any deficiency in the revenue caused by the repeal of 10*s*. of the Duty on Malt, and the repeal of the Assessed Taxes, ought, if possible, to be made good by a corresponding reduction in the expenditure of the country; and if this could not be effected, by the imposition of new taxes on the property of the country."

Mr. *Gilbert Heathcote* said, he wished that on a question of such importance the suggestion of his hon. friend the member for Essex had been adopted, and time given to the Members of the House to consult the wishes of their constituents, At present he had no other light to guide him on the subject than the wishes formerly expressed of the great agricultural community which he represented; and by no part of the country was a more decided opposition offered to a Property-tax when it was a subject of discussion fifteen years ago. Considering that this must be a tax not only upon property, but also upon income—considering it must affect not only the highest classes, but also the whole of the middle classes—and considering, also, that it might be a tax upon property where there was little or no property to tax, because, in order to maintain their credit, people would be very likely to make false returns; on these various grounds he did not think that it would be a desirable expedient. He did not enter into the general question of a Property-tax; that he left for Gentlemen who were better qualified to discuss it than he was. His only object was, to consider this tax with reference to the great agricultural county which he represented, and to take a fair view of its operation upon those who would be affected by it. With regard to the Malt-tax, there were two classes who would be greatly benefited by its repeal. The first consisted of the country gentlemen and the middling classes who inhabited the country districts. He had given this subject much consideration, and he did not think that the labourers were likely to brew very extensively. Although he should vote against any thing which would pledge him to a Property-tax at this time, yet if it could be shown that the Malt-duty might be repealed, and something which would be effectual substituted in its stead, it would surely be very desirable that it should be repealed. But the people ought to consider at what price this advantage was to be gained; and if a Property-tax were put on, how they would be situated. If their bill for malt should be a little less, but if they had to meet the tax-gatherer when he came to demand ten or fifteen per cent upon their property, their income, or their profits in trade, he apprehended they would find that they had purchased the repeal of the Malt-duty a great deal too dear. With regard to the other parties who would be benefited by the reduction of the duty, they were the owners and frequenters of beer-shops and public-houses, and the hon. Baronet, the member for Lincolnshire, had so clearly shown that no great favour or advantage ought to be given to them, that it was unnecessary for him to add a word on that subject. The next subject to which he should address himself was that of the Assessed-taxes, and upon that question he should give his decided opposition to the proposition of the hon. member for the city of London. A great proportion of the farmhouses in the country (106,000) were exempt from the Window-duty, and he saw no reason why the agricultural interest should be desirous to put on a tax which would fall more heavily upon them. A paper which he held in his hand would show the effect of these taxes in the county which he represented. The amount of the House and Window-tax, as assessed at the last assessment for the county of Lincoln, was 25,000*l.* Deducting the amount paid by towns and boroughs, this left but 17,000*l.*; and if the amount paid by the higher classes were deducted, the balance paid by the humbler agricultural classes was very small indeed. He would take the parish in which he lived, and compare the amount of taxes paid now to that which would be paid by the Property-tax. The whole annual income he reckoned at 2,000*l.*, and the Assessed-taxes paid by the squire, the clergyman, and the other inhabitants, amounted to 120*l.* Of that sum he, the squire, paid 85*l.*, the clergyman 25*l.*, and the remaining 10*l.* was the whole that was paid by the rest of the parish. Now, when he considered that the sum of 120*l.*, was all that was raised in such a parish, whether arising from land, trade, manufactures, &c., and compared that sum with the amount that would be raised by a property tax of 10*l.* per cent., how could he be justified in agreeing to such a mode of taxation? The great grievances felt by the country arose not from King's taxes, but from the local and parochial rates. These were twenty times the amount of the Government taxes, and consequently were felt more severely by the people. But if, in the long run, it should be found necessary to resort to a Property-tax, he trusted, it would not be confined to Great Britain, but would be equally extended to the whole of the United Kingdom, and that every subject of his Majesty would pay a fair proportion. The question before the House was to be decided only by a choice of two evils, by continuing the Malt-tax, or imposing a tax on income and property. He wished to take off the Malt-tax, but he would, under present circumstances, rather submit to that evil than consent to a Property-tax.

Sir *John Wrottesley* said, he had listened with great attention to the speech of the hon. member for Middlesex, and he could not at all gather from his arguments how the deficiency was to be made up in any other way than by a Property-tax. Recollecting well the period when the first Property-tax was laid on, and the various debates which took place in Parliament and out of it, he would take the liberty of shortly calling the attention of the House to the situation of the country, the Minister, and the effects of the tax, at the time. The hon. member for Middlesex had argued that taxes might be diminished without any injury to the revenue, and had adduced, as a proof of his statement, that when the duty on wine was diminished the revenue increased. But the hon. Member ought to bear in mind that it was quite a different thing to make a reduction such as that which had been made on the wine duties, and substitute an uncertain tax for two most important and certain taxes. The hon. Member proposed a tax of one per cent. on real property when descending from one person to another. Now he thought it must be obvious the amount which could be raised by such means would fall far short of the necessities of the State. A great part of the property of the country was entailed, and, in many instances, property was in the hands of trustees, so that the proprietor might die while the property would still remain in the same hands. Such a tax he considered as one surrounded by great difficulties, and not at all likely to come up to the expectations of the hon. Member. Looking at the state of the Revenue—at the reduction of a million and a-half this year, in addition to the reduction of former years, he was quite convinced that if further reduction were to be made without some equivalent, the fundholder would become rather anxious about the payment of his dividends. It ought also to be borne in mind that the Resolution of the noble Lord was not directed against a Property-tax under every circumstance, but applied merely to its inexpediency at the present time. And could any one say that there were not several important questions before the House which must be disposed of this Session—such as the Bank Charter, the East India Charter, and several others, which they could hardly dispose of before they parted, and the necessity of attending to which ought to preclude them from then thinking of changing the whole financial system of the country. The Property-tax owed its origin to the peculiar circumstances of the country during Mr. Pitt's administration. It owed its origin to the low state of credit, and the impossibility of raising sufficient money within the year to meet the expenditure. Mr. Pitt first tried to raise money by imposing heavy duties, by tripling and quadrupling taxes on various articles, but that did not succeed. He next tried an Income-tax; but that was so much disliked that neither the House nor the country would bear it, and he was sure they would not bear it now. Mr. Pitt first had a Property-tax of five per cent—then raised it to six and a half, and in 1806 it was finally raised to ten per cent. Now he would just call the attention of the House (which probably was not aware of the fact) to the number of clauses in that Bill in order to show what time it would require to pass such a Bill. It contained no less than 229 clauses, and were a Bill of the kind to be introduced now he did not see that it could be made more brief or would occupy less of the time of the House than it did during Mr. Pitt's administration. With the other great questions in their hands, therefore, what prospect would there be of such a Bill getting through both Houses this Session? He would now state the amount of the Property-tax at ten per cent, comparing, as he went along, the circumstances of the country during the war to what they are now, in order to show that those who expected any thing like the same amount in the present state of the country would be greatly disappointed on making the trial. In April 1813, the total amount of the Property-tax was 14,208,000*l.*, and the expense of the collection was 706,000*l.*, leaving a clear revenue of 13,502,000*l.* That sum was levied on five different species of property under schedules A, B, C, D, E. Schedule A comprehended the assessment of property at the rate of ten per cent, that produced 5,600,000*l.* Schedule B regulated the tax on tenants, there being 1*s.* 6*d.* in the pound paid by tenants in England, and 1*s.* in Scotland, that difference was made because rents were much higher in Scotland, there being no Poor-rates in that country; the revenue arising from this department was somewhat better than 2,000,000*l.* Schedule C regulated the tax on dividends, which produced 2,649,000*l.*; Schedule D the tax on profits of trade, which amounted to 2,776,000*l.*; and schedule E the tax on public offices and salaries, which produced about 1,600,000*l.* That last tax was the only one fairly regulated, and almost the only one in which the returns were honestly made. Suppose, then, the House were to pass such a tax now, he would ask could any thing like 14,000,000*l.* be raised? They would never think of imposing a tax of 1*s.* 6*d.* on the tenant; the injustice of such a tax was admitted by all, because it made the tenant, who paid the highest rent, and who, of course, had the least profit, pay most to the Government. Schedule B must therefore be struck out of the list, and there would consequently be a diminution of more than 2,000,000*l.* There must also be a considerable reduction calculated on the amount of revenue to be raised from the dividends; for he was convinced the House would not tax persons who had incomes under 200*l.* a-year, and when it was recollected what a vast number of fundholders there was under the amount, they would see what a falling off there would be on that head. According to a Return moved for by the hon. member for Essex, it appeared that the total number of persons who received dividends from the Three per Cent Consolidated Annuities amounted to 95,555, and then there were 84,184 persons who received half yearly dividends under 100*l.* The same proportion held good in nearly all the other stocks, and consequently the House would see that great reductions must be made in the revenue arising from dividends. The same must be said of the profits from trade. Every one knew, that the profits from trade were very different now from what they were during the war; and he would venture to say, that if the tax were to apply to this schedule at all it would not only be very unproductive, but would cause great distress, and great irritation if resisted. The last schedule included all public officers, officers of the army and navy, clerks of the customs and excise, in short every person in the pay of Government, and what with the reduction of the army and navy, the consolidation of boards and other circumstances, it was quite clear that on this head also there must be a considerable decrease. Looking at the deduction, therefore, altogether, it was quite clear, that even if tenants were still to pay 1*s.* 6*d.*, and all fundholders to pay as formerly, not more than 10,000,000*l.* could be anticipated from the tax; and supposing that the whole tax was to be taken off schedule B and a part of schedule C, and taking into account also the fall of rents, the decrease might be safely put down at 4,000,000*l.*, which, taken from 10,000,000*l.*, would leave only 6,000,000*l.* of clear revenue. That was the utmost of the amount that could be raised in England and Scotland. With regard to Ireland he could hardly venture to give an opinion further than this, that he believed few persons on the Stock Exchange would be found to furnish money on the security of a Property-tax to be raised in Ireland. Believing, therefore, that a tax on property would lead to great discontent, and that the evils arising from the Malt-tax were greatly inferior, he should support the Resolution of the noble Lord. He might also add, that when the Property-tax was first raised—it might be called rather a benevolence (the term used when voluntary grants were made to our Kings) than a tax. The army of Bonaparte was then on the opposite coast, threatening an invasion, and the people paid willingly for the defence of the country. Such would not be the feelings of the people in peace. He would conclude by saying, not that the country, under all circumstances, should reject a Property-tax, but that its adoption now would be inexpedient.

Mr. *Robinson* must say, that he thought the speech of the hon. Baronet was extremely inconsistent, and was rather calculated to support the Motion of the hon. Baronet, the member for London, than to oppose it. He did not blame the noble Lord for the manner in which he had treated this question. Indeed the noble Lord had put the question on a fair, candid, and manly footing, when he called on the House to consider all the consequences of the vote of the other night. But then there were so many things mixed up with that matter. First of all, the House were called on to consider the expediency of rescinding the vote of the other night come to in a full House—at least in a House of not less than 300 Members, which was a greater number than usually sanctioned their proceedings.

Then the House were called on to affirm or reject the proposition of the hon. Baronet. Thirdly, the Members were called on to do this with all the horrors of a Property-tax in full prospect; and fourthly, the noble Lord had mixed up with all these other matters an intimation—he would not call it a threat—of resignation. Now, he must say, that he did not like this last part of the proceeding; for the noble Lord knew very well that, in making such an intimation, he made an appeal to the Members likely to influence the judgment of many of them. Still, however, he could not blame the noble Lord for doing it; all he regretted was, that the noble Lord should have thought it necessary. For himself, that he was ready to support a Property-tax was well known. He did not desire it, because he thought it in itself the best tax that could be devised, but because he thought its adoption a less evil than that of the continuance of some of the present taxes. What was the situation in which the country was now placed, when the people at large were unable to pay the present taxes, and men of property were unwilling to have the burthen cast directly upon them. He thought that the vote of the other night might be extended from the partial reduction to the total abolition of the Malt-duty, and that the Hop-duty might go with it, and yet that means might be found to meet the demands of the public service, and to maintain public credit. He did not think that the vote of the other night was good in itself, so much as he thought it good in forcing upon the House to consider the whole taxation of the country. He should not now go into the question of the distress of the country; but he was not sorry that the necessity of considering it, and the best means of meeting it, had been forced upon the House. During the eighteen years of peace, various devices had been adopted with a view to relieve, first one class of the people, and then another; and he wished to know whether, at the expiration of this period, the people were still to be dragged through other years of difficulty and experiment, before a Property-tax was imposed; for it seemed that to that tax we must come at last, since the very words of the noble Lord's Amendment only went to say, that it could not be adopted at present. He did not wish to force the Government or the country into the adoption of such a tax, except so far as it seemed to him most likely to relieve the burthens of the people. As soon as there was any reasonable expectation of the amelioration of the condition of the people, he should be willing to forego the proposition; but, till that was the case, he should certainly support it; and he believed that the causes which affected the prosperity and comfort of the people, were likely rather to continue than to abate. Under these circumstances it became the duty of the House to take off the taxes upon Malt and upon Houses and Windows, and to substitute for them a tax upon Property. He believed there would be no difficulty whatever in raising the money to meet the deficiency; although he must admit, that he did not agree with the hon. member for Middlesex, who, in his peculiar way, proposed to take several millions out of the Exchequer, and to trust to savings to make up the deficiency. He wished now to observe that, if it was necessary, he could show high authority for the opinions he held upon the subject of the Property-tax. He referred to a speech of Mr. Huskisson, delivered in 1830, in favour of a commution of taxes. In that speech the right hon. Gentleman expressed a "doubt whether the country would ever right itself without receiving some greater relief than could possibly be administered by a direct repeal of taxation. The method of levying the revenue was a subject fraught with interest to all who desired to see economy practised in the management of the State, and he could see nothing irregular in proposing such an inquiry, more especially at a time when a general impression was entertained throughout every part of the kingdom. that the agricultural and manufacturing interests could not exist under the pressure of the existing direct taxation upon industry."* He was contented to rest his views, then, on Mr. Huskisson's words, and political opponents, as well as admirers, admitted the vigour of Mr. Huskisson's intellect. He believed, that it was now universally agreed that any tax on a raw material was a material check upon industry, by pressing upon productiveness in its first operations. He knew that on the other hand, the Property-tax was objected to as inquisitorial; but he wished to know whether the taste or delicacy of individuals, in having their property inquired into, was to be put into competition with the mass of suffering existing throughout the country. He did not speak on this question as the representative of any particular interest, for he considered it to be a great national question, in which the interests of all were alike involved. In his opinion, the time had arrived when they were bound to relieve the country from the present burthen of taxation. He believed that Ministers had done as much as they could —it was for the House to do that which would really afford relief. As to those who voted for the repeal of the malt tax on Friday night, he did not see how it was possible for them now to support the proposition of the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. That consideration, however, he should leave to the hon. Members themselves. He did hope, however, that Gentlemen would discharge from their minds an idea which seemed somewhat too prevalent—namely, that they were to represent particular classes. Let not the House evade the question. Let them consider in what situation they would be placed if the Motion of the noble Lord was affirmed, and that of the hon. member for the City of London rejected. The House, he contended, would be placed in a very different situation from that in which it stood before the vote of Friday night. He did not think the noble Lord's Motion put the question fairly before the House, and in his opinion the Government would have acted more wisely, if they had acquiesced in the vote of Friday night, rather than endeavour to get rid of it by any subterfuge. He did not think that any want of confidence as to the resources of the country was felt out of doors. Indeed the very trifling fluctuation of one per cent in the funds indicated no such thing, and was hardly more than was sure to take place on a distant prospect of a change of Ministry. He did not think that the vote of the other night had reduced them to the position which the noble Lord seemed to consider them placed in, nor had it rendered necessary that course of proceeding which the noble Lord had adopted, and against which he (Mr. Robinson) should certainly give his vote.

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* Hansard (new series) xxiii. p. 15.

Mr. *Benett* said, that he always felt he owed a debt of gratitude to the present Administration for the noble manner in which they had conducted themselves upon the subject of the Reform Bill, and it was therefore his earnest wish never to be called on to oppose them; but he must nevertheless act in such a manner as not to lay himself open to the accusation of his constituents, or of his own conscience. He considered that the vote of Friday night was a triumph of the popular cause; it was the first working of the Reform Bill; it was a proof of the excellence of that change which the Ministers themselves had introduced into that House, that the House were enabled to vote against an administration the most popular that had ever existed. He thought that by that vote of the other night they had done themselves great honour, but they had done greater honour to those Ministers who had carried that Reform Bill which had rendered them the Representatives of the country, and given to that House the control of that Government which had been accustomed to control the House. He regretted the proposition now made by the noble Lord, and his utter inability to vote with the Ministers. He thought that the retirement of the Ministry would be a great evil to the country—perhaps, he might say, the greatest that could now befal the country; but still, let the consequence be what it might, he could not vote with them on the present occasion. It was, perhaps, true, that the time had not yet come for them to have a Property tax, though in his opinion, it was the best that could be adopted for the purpose of assisting the productive industry of the country. He knew, however, that the whole community was not of that opinion, and that consequently the time for having such a tax had not yet come; but he also knew well, that the time was not far distant when a Property-tax must be adopted for the purpose of preserving the public faith. He regretted the manner in which the noble Lord had now placed the question. The consequence of it was, that the noble Lord would drive him either to stultify his own vote, or else to carry with it the reduction of a tax which would go to relieve a class of rich citizens, rather than the people at large. In all the reductions of taxation which, as a humble Member of that House, he had recommended, he had endeavoured in the first instance, to get those reduced which chiefly affected the necessaries of life, and the comforts of the lower orders of the people. In his opinion, the tax on malt was one of this kind. The persons who paid the House and Window tax were in general persons who were well able to bear it. That tax was, in point of fact, paid by the landlords, not by the tenants, and it chiefly fell upon the rich citizens and shopkeepers of London. But it was the labourer who paid the malt tax; it was he who suffered either by being totally deprived of the use of a wholesome beverage, or by being compelled to drink beer of a very inferior kind. He remembered the time when the labourer went forth to the field with a gallon of good beer given him by the farmer, but that excellent custom had been totally put an end to by the effect of a heavy malt tax. To remove that tax would be to relieve the labouring classes of the country. He wished, therefore, most earnestly to see that tax removed, and he was sorry that the noble Lord had mixed it up with another tax of a different description, and resting on different grounds. He regretted the result of the Motion made the other night by the hon. member for Whitehaven, for if it had been adopted, he did not think that the consequences would have been what the noble Lord anticipated, for he was by no means, convinced that the standard of value must necessarily have been lowered, or that public faith must have been broken. In his opinion a Property tax, such as that recommended by Mr. Ricardo, might be adopted, and indeed ought to be adopted; and that the levying of such a tax would fully enable the Ministers to meet the difficulties arising from the abolition of the malt duty, at the same time that it would press with less oppressive weight on the lower classes of the people. Some of the taxes, too, proposed by the noble Lord in opening the Budget to be repealed, might be continued without so serious an injury to the comforts of the lower orders as the continuance of the malt duty. The duty on cotton, that upon tiles, and that upon shop windows, the repeal of the last of which had produced very little satisfaction, might all be altered so as to meet the deficiency occasioned by the repeal of the malt tax. But if none of these would do, if those taxes proposed to be repealed must be repealed, then there was another mode of meeting the deficiency, which was by a tax upon beer — a tax which he did not believe would raise the price of beer one farthing; for the reduction effected by the abolition of the malt tax would be more than sufficient to meet the increase that would be occasioned by the imposition of a tax upon beer. He thought that there were so many ways of meeting the deficiency to be occasioned by the reduction of the malt tax, that he saw no reason for giving up the matter in the way proposed by the noble Lord, and he should therefor vote against the noble Lord's Amendment.

Mr. *Cobbett:* I am sorry to interpose between the House and the speech of the hon. and learned Member; [Mr. Serjeant Spankie who had risen at the same time with Mr. Cobbett] but I hope he will hereafter find a time for making it. It seems to me as if every Gentleman who has addressed the Chair to-night sedulously kept out of view the only important point to be decided, viz. the character of this House. My opinion is, that if the House rescinds the resolution of Friday last, the consequences to the country may be most fatal. Be it observed, too, that the noble Lord says not a word about resigning his Amendment: that he has sedulously kept out of view also; but I shall make a few further remarks upon that before I conclude. Various observations have fallen from hon. Members which it is necessary for me to touch; and I believe I must go backwards with them, as my memory will serve me better that way than any other. First, the hon. member for South Wilts, said a great deal about a Property tax, but nothing distinct as regards a plan — nothing that could be very clearly understood and defined. However, he quoted an authority; and men should be very careful when they quote authorities that they are good for something. What they tender us as the results of their own judgment, that we are bound to respect—and, generally speaking, it is worthy of it; but he told us, that he had Mr. Ricardo's authority in favour of a Property-tax. Do not let us forget, however, that the right hon. Baronet (Sir Robert Peel) had Mr. Ricardo's authority that his Bill of 1819 only reduced prices three and a half per cent, while the hon. member for South Wilts himself must know that it reduced them a vast deal more. Therefore he should pause a little before he relied upon such an authority as the said Mr. Ricardo. It is always dangerous to find fault with those who bestow praise, because it generally arises from the kindness and generosity of the applauder, but the hon. member for Worcester (Mr. Robinson), after eulogising the character of Mr. Huskisson as a sagacious politician, and an enlightened statesman, told us that on his authority, we are to proceed to an Income tax. True, Mr. Huskisson did not say so himself; but he is to be understood as meaning it, being, according to the hon. member for Worcester, a great man and a profound statesman. But is the hon. Gentleman aware that he might have quoted Mr. Huskisson's authority as to the operation of the Bill of 1819? He (Mr. Huskisson) in fact, produced the Bill of 1819, which, however goes by the name of the right hon. Baronet; for, in 1811, Mr. Huskisson agreed to a Resolution of a Committee, of which, I believe, he was Chairman—no, Mr. Horner, I remember, was its Chairman—the effect of which was to compel the Bank at once to pay in gold, without restraint and without preparation. Then, too, the whole Whig party urged the necessity of the Bank returning to cash payments within two years after 1811—this, too, in the very middle of the war, while loans were going on, and all the world knows by this time that the plan was little short of downright madness. For this reason, I say, that Members should know the history of the conduct of these great and profound statesmen before they hold them up as authorities. The consequence was, that Mr. Huskisson approved of the Bill of 1819. It is my unhappy lot to be doomed to censure the conduct of the right hon. Baronet in this respect in a very public manner—to censure his wisdom; but this I must say even for the right hon. Baronet, that he was innocence itself compared with Mr. Huskisson. He was spotless innocence; for Mr. Huskisson might be truly called, and not the right hon. Baronet, the Coryphæus of that band of blunderers. But, coming to more sober and enlightened days, Mr. Huskisson was one of the Ministry when the Bill of 1826 passed —he it was that declared in the House of Commons that the country was within forty-eight hours of barter. Now, such a prominent person, though he might be thought at the time wise and profound—the mentor of a Ministry—is not exactly the person in our day to be eulogised. We are liable to be misled by such praises, and I therefore request the hon. member for Worcester not again to commit such an error. I will now touch upon the question before us. I was sorry to hear the hon. member for South Wilts, and one of the hon. members for Lincolnshire, draw a supposed distinction between their constituents and the other inhabitants of the Empire. They may be well assured that this is not the way to promote peace. I have the honour to represent a great manufacturing town—where there is not an inch of land—where no person seems to know what land is. But have I shown any want of sympathy for the agricultural districts? Am I less anxious than others to procure for them the repeal of the Malt-tax?—No; I should be ashamed if I had any such feeling on my mind, for it is my duty to do what I can for the whole people. Such remarks as I have alluded to must have an injurious, perhaps, a fatal tendency—they divide the people among themselves, and prevent the restoration of harmony—they set one class against another, and produce that irritation, which, with the prospect before us, is most to be apprehended. The same hon. Gentleman spoke of the rich shopkeepers of London!—rich shopkeepers of London!—rich shopkeepers! Does he know how often the same leg of mutton bone marches backwards and forwards to the table of these rich shopkeepers? If he had to pursue the same frugal habits—if he had to eat the bread of care—in short, if he had to endure what they endure, he would not call them the rich shopkeepers of London. It is not the landlord who pays any part of the tax upon houses and windows; the tenant pays the whole of it, and the house he occupies would be merely four walls, and worth nothing without the talent, the industry and attention of the tenant. Let me ask how many houses are made valuable merely by the reputation of an industrious tradesman? It receives a character from his character; and in such a case, how can it be said, that the landlord pays the tax? I now come to the speech of the noble Lord, some parts of which I heard with very great pleasure. He told us that the Motion of Friday night took him somewhat by surprise. By surprise! Why, a notice for the repeal of the Malt-tax, was given on the first day of the Session by the hon. member for Surrey. The hon. member for Lincolnshire subsequently gave a notice which seemed to supplant the other, and he altered it from the whole to half of the Malt-tax; but the subject was not brought on until three months after the first notice, and it was talked of from the beginning of the Session to the day on which the discussion occurred. It is impossible, therefore, for the noble Lord fairly to say, upon reflection, that he was taken by surprise. What too was ever more deliberate than that discussion? The noble Lord says, that the Motion was advocated by different Gentlemen on different grounds. I heard no different grounds; the only difference I heard was, that one set of Gentlemen contended that it would be sufficient to take half the tax, while another set insisted that the whole should be repealed. I was among the latter; and I did not hear one word from the other side in the way of answer. The only answer was, that truly Ministers could not spare it. That appeared to my mind not so much the question, as whether the people could spare it. However, that point I will leave, and talk of the part of the noble Lord's speech which pleased me. He said in one place, that the Income-tax formerly imposed was very unpopular, and he said truly. It was very unpopular. The hon. Alderman told us, that if it were but a Property Income-tax, he did not care about the particulars; but let me tell him, that if it were such a tax as was before imposed, it would not be collected for half a year. Although, under no circumstances, would I give my vote for a Property Income-tax, yet it might be made very different from that which existed formerly. What was that? It was the most unfair, the foulest tax, ever laid upon the people, one only excepted, of which I shall speak on another occasion. Here was a surgeon with an income of 1,000*l.* a-year, depending entirely on his life, his health, his success, perhaps, in setting a bone. All taken together, it would not be worth four years' purchase; and yet, though he might be fifty or sixty years old—thanks to the Whigs, who came in in 1806—he was obliged to pay ten per cent upon his 1,000*l.* a-year, instead of six and a quarter per cent., which was the rule before they entered upon office. What I have said of the surgeon applies to other persons in trade. The surgeon was taxed ten per cent. on his income—I was taxed ten per cent. on my income. If I had broken a finger or two, or gone blind, I should have been able to earn no income, but still I must have paid my ten per cent. The Lord or Gentleman with a landed estate in his own possession in perpetuity paid no more: his widow and children had it at his death, but the widow and children of the surgeon were left totally unprovided for. Was that a fair tax? I trust that the noble Lord would not consent to such a tax. I trust that the members for the City, if they were absent from the division on Friday night by accident, would not be absent when a proposition was made to saddle the country with such a tax as that. But the noble Lord said this, which pleased me so much—that you cannot exempt one class and not another. Mark the justice of this—that it is unfair to exempt one class and to lay the tax upon another. Such a course would render the Government and the Parliament hateful. I agree, too, with every vein in my body, when the noble Lord laid it down that every man ought to pay taxes in proportion to the amount of his property and the protection it required. This position may be disputed by some, and very likely it will be met by my right hon. opponent (Mr. Spring Rice). I am pledged to show, and I will do it on the proper occasion, that millions a-year are collected from persons possessing nothing but personal property, while real property escapes from the payment of a single farthing. I am pledged to show a great deal more than that to be sure. Ministers have always promised a great deal to the people: they have dealt in speeches which remind me of a line of Swift's—

> "Fine words! I wonder where you stole 'em."

I am sure they are not to be found in the 55th Geo. 3, nor in the 107th chapter of 3rd Geo. 4, both relating to stamps, and only differing as the one is more profligate than the other. Under those statutes, a man having an estate of 200,000*l.* value, pays no more for stamps than a man who has a piece of land of only 200*l.* value. But I will put that matter aside for the present, that I may advert to what was said by some other Members. I think, with the noble Lord, that if any of the Assessed-taxes are to be taken off, the whole ought to be repealed; because that puts an end to all expense at once. The vexation will not be diminished, if you leave any part of them. I do not ascribe that vexation to the wishes or intentions of Government; because I do not ascribe to them a desire to create ill-will, and to make enemies for nothing; but the mode of collection is such, that you must employ persons who ought not to be employed by anybody. The oppression under the head of surcharges is beyond all description. The noble Lord will hardly believe what I am now going to say. I have been charged with the tax for a shopman for two years: now, I have no shopman, but I keep a shopwoman. When the collector has applied for the tax, she has answered that there is no shopman; and the retort was, "Well, then, Mr. Cobbett may appeal." I did appeal; but it was of no use. When I was at Barn-Elms, I was charged with the tax for a bailiff. That, said I, I will not pay, and God knows how many letters I received from a Mr. Bates, I think was his name. A Motion has been made for the Repeal of the House and Window-tax: I am showing the evils and annoyances that arise from the collection of it; and if I am not speaking to the question, I am no judge of what the question is. Gentlemen may be well assured, that if they have a mind to come to the end of my speech quickly, the best thing for them to do is not to interrupt me. To return: I never did, and never would pay that bailiff-tax. What I relate of myself is only an illustration; it is notorious all over the kingdom that people in the middle ranks of life are grievously suffering in the same way. I had a petition to present to-night, which I did not present because it did not exactly belong to this debate; it is from nine farmers, and it contains many very authentic details. They were cited to appear before Commissioners fourteen miles from home, on a market-day, too, and at a distance from the market town, for sporting without a license: when they arrived, not a particle of evidence was adduced against them, and they applied to the Commissioners to know who was to pay them for their loss of time and travelling expenses. I need not add that they obtained nothing; and this is one of the evils that ought not to be permitted to exist. If taxes are not repealed, something ought to be done to remedy this species of annoyance. A noble Lord has talked of a *mouvement* party, adopting the French term, as if there was a *mouvement* party here wishing to level all distinctions of rank, and to destroy all rights of property. He asked what was the first cause of this party in France, and hinted, that something of the kind was aimed at in England. But those who talk in this way never go back to the real origin of the French Revolution: they only begin with Danton and Robespierre. If they look into Arthur Young, they will see that the great first cause of the French Revolution was the unequal assessment of the taxes; not the weight of taxation, but the unequal assessment; laying more upon the poor than upon the rich: as classes became lower, the assessment was heavier, particularly upon the *sub-delegues*, which I believe answered to our surcharges. What was the answer to us, when we adopted the Resolution we are now called upon to rescind? What was the sole answer? We proved the cost of the malt, and the injurious consequences of the tax; that Government only got 15*s*., while the cost to the people was enhanced 40*s*., and what was the answer? "We cannot spare the money—we must have the money—we cannot do without it." Now, the thing is to show, that Government can do without it, and for this purpose, what have we more to do, without going into particulars, than to prove that our establishments now cost within a trifle of fourteen millions a-year, while, at the end of the last peace they cost no more than about 4,200,000*l*. Why should they cost more now than then? Is there any reason for it? Is the late successful war a good reason for it? Is your abundant harvest of glory a good reason for it? Is your having Colonies a good reason for it? Were your Colonies a gain or were they not? "Yes—a gain, to be sure," the noble Lord will say, "we gained dominion." Dominion! did we gain wealth as well as dominion? Strange, that we should grow poor by having gained wealth; but this fact let me state, for the information of the House, that we expend more upon Canada, in English money, every year, than the total amount of goods exported to that colony. Thus, such colonies are no gain. If we have won anything, we have won a loss. But, besides our establishments, what have we? Our Civil List is double the amount in 1792—salaries are double what they were in 1792. The right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir James Graham) knows, that 113 Privy Councillors cost the country no less a sum than 650,000*l.*—that pensions are far greater than in 1792, and that many of them have been bestowed in defiance of the letter of the law. We pay 51,000*l.* to the retired clerks of the War-office alone. Last year 41,000*l.* was expended for Secret Service-money; after eighteen years of peace, that sum was paid for spies and informers. We have an army, a militia, a yeomanry cavalry, a police for the great towns; yet still 41,000*l.* was wanted for spies and informers. This money was so secretly expended, that no account is to be rendered, and the man who pays it is not permitted to name the items to his colleague. We call ourselves the guardians of the public purse, and we prove ourselves pretty guardians truly, if we allow people to dip their hands into it whenever they like, and to take out whatever they like. If the hon. member for South Wilts be sincere in his wish that the poor man should have his pint of wholesome beer, and not be compelled to drink water, why does he not vote for saving this 41,000*l.*? After all, the point for us to decide upon is, whether the money cannot be saved? "Oh, no," say some hon. Gentlemen, "we cannot save it without a breach of the national faith." I have often wondered when I have heard country gentlemen—ay, and officers of state—talk in this way of the necessity of preserving national faith, that they did not think of it before. Do they remember, that there was a certain measure in the year 1819, which doubled the amount of the debt? Yet then we were under the guidance of first-rate oracle Ricardo, and second-rate oracle Huskisson — the Orpheus and Amphion of the day, who, as an hon. Member said, charmed the House by the music of their speech. They felt no scruple in breaking faith with all the rest of the nation. At last it was discovered, that it was impossible to do justice in this respect; and here is what land-owners ought to attend to. Justice ought to be done between them and the people; but you never will prevail upon those who live by the taxes to do justice to those who do not live by the taxes. Those who live by the taxes govern the affairs of the nation: they fatten upon the taxes, and therefore they ruin all those who receive nothing out of the taxes, and first or last ruin themselves too. There is not at this moment a gentleman in England of moderate fortune, and who has a considerable family, who does not look round with sorrow at the number of children for whom he has to provide, in order that they may live in the same style as that to which he has himself been accustomed. Therefore it is, that we go on and on, and in every direction are eaten up with usury, and this, too, in consequence of a degree of infatuation such as never before afflicted mortal man. But, in conclusion, let me observe, that it is upon the character of the House that we are now to decide. We may amuse ourselves with the idea that what we do may be undone; we may fancy that we are unseen; but the truth is, that the eyes of the whole nation are upon us. Last Saturday night the bells in Berkshire and Surrey were set ringing for joy at the repeal of the Malt-tax. Judge how the feelings of the people will be disappointed and depressed when they find that they have been deceived. This too, by whom? By a Reformed House of Commons, after having sat for three months without making the slightest effort to relieve them. The Minister having produced his Budget, which not only gave no relief, but showed that no relief would be given, on Friday last the House of Commons—the Reformed House of Commons—took off half the Malt-tax, and that determination the people hailed with joy. Are you prepared to say, that to-morrow shall carry to your constituents the news that on Tuesday you rescinded the resolution which on Friday you had without qualification adopted? Talk of nominee Parliaments, what nominee Parliament ever did anything half so bad? What could a nominee Parliament do more than be the lacqueys of the Ministers? A Reformed Parliament takes on Friday the first step towards a removal of the burdens of the people, and on Tuesday the Members of that Reformed Parliament are whipped in to do the behests of a Ministry which proved itself opposed to all reductions. Since your election you have been breathing an atmosphere in which men were accustomed to eat their words, and the successors of the old nominee Parliament evince as strong an appetite for that species of food as any of its predecessors. What confidence can the people have in men who so depart from every pledge given to a body of constituents? Yes, the people will, if you rescind the best vote you ever gave, withdraw from you all confidence; and unless Parliament possesses the confidence of the people, I cannot anticipate any but the most fatal results. A Noble Lord, on the other side, has told the House, that unless they agreed to the proposition that he this night moved, he would resign; at which the House falls into a fit of the utmost consternation. Like naughty children whom a mother might lock up in a dark room, they cried out, "Oh! Do not leave us mammy,—mammy, do not leave us." A senator of old quitted the senate house, saying that the same fire which destroyed him would likewise consume those whom he left behind. I do not say, that the noble Lord says any thing of the sort—no, no; God forbid that I should ever insinuate anything of that kind; but, to repeat the question that I put before—how can you ever again look your constituents in the face after rescinding the vote of Friday night—not that much importance lies in the vote itself, but in the degree in which it may affect the character of the House itself, and the degree in which it will diminish the confidence of the people in their Representatives. The annihilation of that confidence will be nothing less than the destruction of that Constitution which has long been the object of our own pride, and the admiration of the world.

Mr. *Spring Rice* admitted, that if that House were to forfeit its character and dignity, it would greatly injure the Constitution; but the question was, would they do so by the course now proposed by his noble friend? He had heard many fine phrases and illustrations borrowed from Roman and English history, but they were intended to draw them away from the real question before the House, and had no reference whatever to its character and dignity. What was it they were now called upon to do by the resolution of his noble friend—to repeal any law?—No; though there had been instances of the Parliament repealing a law passed in the same session;—to throw out a Bill which had been brought in, or to rescind a motion for leave to bring in a Bill?—Nothing of the kind. What, then, was the fact? Why, that a notice of motion, which stood after two others that were expected to take a long time, but which had been given up, was brought forward, contrary to the general expectation, and had been carried by a very small majority, and this resolution, carried under such circumstances, was to be considered as irrevocable as the laws of the Medes and Persians. But would not hon. Members see, that the dignity and character of the House were already pledged to other Motions? Had not resolutions been passed, and bills brought in founded upon them, to relieve the country from taxation; and were these all to give way to a simple resolution, carried under the circumstances to which he had alluded? What would those parties say, to whom relief was intended to be given? What would the soap-manufacturers and the cotton-manufacturers, and those who were to be partially relieved from the House and Window-tax, say of the character and dignity of Parliament, if the resolution of Friday were to be allowed to nullify the measures intended for their relief? What would become of the dignity of that House if they were to rescind the vote to which the House came on the 26th of March? On that occasion a motion was made for an enquiry into the operation of the Assessed-taxes, particularly the House and Window-taxes, with a view to the substitution of an equitable tax on property. Why, it was absurd to say, that they were not as much bound to maintain the one as the other. If they were bound to adhere to the resolution of Friday, were they not equally bound to maintain the decision of the 26th of March? But why, he would ask, on principle, should they repeal the whole of the Malt-tax for the benefit of the landed interest, and refuse to the population of the towns the repeal of the House and Window-tax? Was it possible to take off both, which amounted to about 6,000,000*l.*? [Some Members here observed that it was only 5,000,000*l.* others that it was not more than 4,900,000*l.*] Be the amount 5,000,000*l*, or 6,000,000*l.*, what was the substitute for it but a Property-tax? And the resolution in the hands of the Chair said no more than that it was inexpedient to propose such a tax in the midst of a session. It was an easy thing to talk of a Property-tax, but the imposition of that tax so that it should operate equally, and the machinery for carrying it into beneficial effect were matters of the utmost difficulty, even supposing it was open to no objection whatever of any other kind. He confessed it did excite in his mind the utmost surprise to find two hon. Members representing the city of London advocating the imposition of a Property-tax, for their conduct amounted to nothing less. In the year 1816, a Petition was presented from a very worshipful body in that city, in which the petitioners set forth the abhorrence with which they regarded a Property-tax, as well with respect to its principles as to the mode of its operation, as being vexatious and oppressive, and as tending to maintain an odious, arbitrary, and most detestable inquisition into the most private circumstances of individuals—hostile to every sense of freedom which the people of this country entertained, and repugnant to the principles of the British Constitution. So abhorrent to the sentiments of the citizens of London was that tax, that they would not hear of a reduction of it even to the extent of five per cent. He had no doubt the citizens of London were now as averse from taxation as they had ever been. Let those who so strenuously opposed the Malt-duty and the Assessed-taxes beware lest they brought upon themselves something worse. Had they lost all recollection of the fable of King Stork and King Log? Let them beware how they inflicted hastily, inconsiderately, and without deliberation, anything so formidable as a Property-tax. Those who were so anxious for the character and dignity of the House, would do well to look carefully lest they might compromise infinitely more by legislation without inquiry than by adopting the plan of the Government—a Government which, he might be permitted to say, had repealed not less than three millions of taxes in two years. They proposed now to proceed at the same rate, and for his part he had no difficulty in expressing a full conviction that no plan of a practicable kind could be proposed for absolutely getting rid of taxes—all that could be done in the way of further change must be in the nature of commutation. It was, as he thought, perfectly vain to talk of taking off taxes, until they first showed how the necessary reductions were to be effected—let them economise first, and point out the extent of reduced taxation afterwards, but not before. On the subject of the Window-tax, he wished to call the attention of the House to a matter of some importance, having reference to a misapprehension which had gone abroad of what had fallen from his noble friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. What his noble friend proposed was, that shopkeepers claiming exemptions as such from the Window-tax, according to the scale that he laid down, should, in consequence thereof be relieved from one-half of their House-tax. Now, that he conceived to be a great boon to them, and he was the more anxious to advert to the subject from the circumstance of his noble friend's statement on the subject having been misunderstood. There was another topic to which he desired to call the attention of the House before he proceeded further, he alluded to the great outcry which had been raised respecting the operation of the Window-tax, in its effects on the poor as compared with the rich. He would read to the House a document which he had compiled on this subject, which would set it in a clearer light. The right hon. Gentleman accordingly read the following statement:—

Number of Inhabited Houses in Great Britain
1831.

England	2,323,141
Wales	153,698
Scotland	369,340
	2,846,179
Number charged to the Inhabited House-tax (or little more than 1-7).	430,617
Free from House-tax	2,415,562
Number charged to Window-tax (little more than 1-7)	377,471
Number exempt from Window-tax ...	2,468,708

Inhabited House Duty.

Total number charged to Inhabited House-duty in Great Britain.

	£		£		Rate.		No.
From	10	to	20	...	1*s*. 6*d*.	...	215,233
	20	to	40	...	2*s*. 3*d*.	...	131,676
	40	upwards		...	2*s*. 10*d*.	...	83,708
							430,617

Number not charged to House duty ...	2,415,562

Number of Houses charged to Window Tax in Great Britain.

Total, including 3,685 chambers at inns of court and colleges		377,471
		3,685
Houses and number of windows ...		373,786
From 8 to 49 ...	36,918	
50 to 99	4,891	
100 to 149	687	
150 and upwards	290	
	5,868	
Add chambers		3,685
Total houses charged to Window-tax ...		377,471
Number of houses not charged ...		2,468,708
Total number of houses		2,846,179

Looking at the number of houses exempt from the Window-tax, he saw it was most untrue to affirm, that that tax pressed with undue severity upon the poor. When it was seen that there were, in Great Britain, 430,000 assessed, and there were as many as 2,415,000 not charged, how could it be said, that that tax pressed on the poor? He would boldly deny, that its removal would be a relief to them. It would be no such thing, but the direct reverse. It was contrary to every principle of justice, that houses should be rated according to what they cost, and not according to what they were worth. Should one man be made to pay for the vanity and folly of another, who, perhaps, by that vanity and folly, deprived him of the means of defraying such unfair tax? No, the obviously equitable mode of proceeding was, to charge upon the actual value in the market. It had been broadly asserted, that the most gross inequality prevailed with regard to the charge made upon some of the houses of those who were called the "Aristocracy"—a term which he altogether disclaimed. He would tell them an anecdote which might be considered to bear upon that point. There was Knowle-park, with which most of them were acquainted—that was rated at 100*l.* a-year; it was thought unjust that the Duke of Dorset should pay so little for such a dwelling, and so thought the taxing officer, but he proceeded cautiously—those officers were cautious in their generation. He raised the valuation to 120*l.*, and that valuation was appealed against, when it was instantly reduced to its original amount of 100*l.*, for it was considered that the expense of keeping such a place in repair, and maintaining it in such a condition as any person residing there must maintain, would so reduce its value, that it could not be worth more than the sum at which it was originally valued; and it was considered, too, that if brought into the market, it would fetch no more—it was even doubtful if it would fetch so much. That which was true of Knowle was equally true of other places. Those who spoke in these strains respecting the country-houses of the wealthier classes overlooked the valuation of town houses. He would trouble the House with a short list.

Devonshire House	£2,500
Northumberland do.	1,500
Stafford	3,900
Hertford	1,500
Chesterfield	2,000
Lansdown	1,650
Apsley	1,850
The House of the hon. member for Essex...	1,320
Norfolk House	1,000
Burlington	1,300

Then, as a proof that the Window-tax did not operate for the exclusive benefit of the rich, and to the manifest disadvantage of the poor, he would just show, from another return, the exact state of the case. The right hon. Gentleman read the following document:—

Amount assessed to the Window Duty on the undermentioned Houses, for the year 1828, *ending* 1829.

—	No. of Windows.	Duty paid at present Scale. £ s. d.	Duty which would be payable at the scale chargeable on 10 Windows. £ s. d.
Harewood-house ...	168	42 17 9	17 10 0
Lowther-castle......	180	46 11 3	18 15 0
Stowe	261	52 12 9	27 3 9
Chatsworth	280	54 1 3	29 3 4
Petworth	350	59 6 3	36 9 2
Eaton-hall	365	60 8 9	38 0 5
Longleat	453	67 0 9	47 3 9
Wentworth-house...	480	69 1 3	50 0 0
Woburn-abbey......	511	71 7 9	53 4 9
Blenheim	722	90 19 3	81 8 4
Total.........	3,820	614 7 0	398 18 6

Present Scale.

Windows.		Per Window. s. d.		Total. £ s. d.
8	...	2 0¾	...	0 16 6
10	...	2 9½	...	1 8 0
20	...	5 7¼	...	5 12 3
30	...	6 6½	...	9 16 3
40	...	7 5½	...	14 18 9
50	...	6 10¾	...	17 5 0
100	...	5 10¼	...	29 8 6
150	...	5 5 1-50	...	40 12 9

If the scale chargeable on eight windows were applied to the higher classes of houses, the results would be as follows:—

Windows.		Under Scale of s. d.		Excess paid under present Scale. £ s. d.
40	...	2 1	...	4 3 4
50	...	2 1	...	5 4 2
100	...	2 1	...	10 8 4
150	...	2 1	...	15 12 6

For Window-tax, therefore, Harewood-house paid 42*l.* 17*s.* 9*d.*, whereas, if it were charged at the same rate as the 10*l.* houses in its neighbourhood, it would pay but 17*l.* 10*s.* Again, Lowther-castle paid 46*l.* 11*s.* 3*d.*, while, if rated as small places, the sum would be only 18*l.* 15*s.* Woburn-abbey had 511 windows, and paid 71*l.* 7*s.* 9*d.*, according to the present scale; but, if it was rated according to the 10*l.* houses, it would not pay more than 53*l.* 4*s.* 9*d.* [*Question*]. He considered he was strictly speaking to the question, because those calculations went to show that, with respect to the Window-tax, the poor were not treated unjustly, and the wealthy were not favoured. He denied the statements of hon. Members who maintained a contrary opinion. He had one word to say upon the reduction of the Malt-duty, which was pressed upon them. He would admit, that every tax was an evil; but it was an evil, like physic, which was sometimes necessary to restore health—as taxes were necessary for the stability of a nation. With respect to taxes, all that could be done would be to choose between two evils. When the Government was pressed for the reduction of the Malt-duty, those who pressed for it did not show much discernment as to the choice of evils. He would show, that within a very few years that tax had been considerably reduced. In 1804, the tax on malt was *34s. 8d.*; in 1820, it was *28s.*; in 1822, it was *20s. 8d.*; which, together with a tax upon beer, amounted to *52s. 7d.* Now, as the tax on malt was at present but *20s. 8d.*, and the Beer-tax was taken off, there had been consequently a reduction with respect to this tax of *31s. 11d.* It was not, therefore, very wise to pitch upon that tax as one that should be further reduced. Hon. Gentlemen had asked, in a menacing manner, how the country would feel if the House rescinded the vote of Friday night last. He had confidence in the good sense of the country, and he was sure, that if the House fearlessly and honestly did its duty, it would be applauded by the country. The hon. Member who had last spoken amused them with allusions to nursery tales, and to ringing of bells in Berkshire, when the announcement of taking off the Malt-duty was learned. That sign of rejoicing might have been made; but was there no ringing of bells at Manchester and Oldham when it was announced that the Cotton-duty was taken off? The same hon. Gentleman sneered at, and seemed to undervalue, everything like national honour and national faith, for if he loved national faith, he would have taken a proper course to relieve the nation of its burthens without making it violate its faith. Now, he would suppose, that the Resolution of the other night was adopted, and that both the Malt-tax and Assessed Taxes were all repealed; was there any hon. Member of that House who could put his hand on his bosom and sincerely declare, that it was his opinion that a Property-tax—the necessary alternative—would be carried [*Hear!*]? He asked, was it likely that hon. Members would be pleased with seeing ten per cent. levied by way of tax on property? If that House wished to see public engagements performed, let them first propose a Property-tax to meet those engagements, and then repeal the taxes in question; but, before they had laid on the former, they could not honourably do away with the latter. Public engagements should be kept as well as private ones, and there was no honest man who had a debt to pay, and held in hand a sum wherewith to discharge it, would part with that sum, and depend on contingencies. Every honest man would understand what he was now saying. Again, the hon. member for Oldham said, that the present was a Reformed Parliament, and that it ought not to be swayed by the dictates of a Minister. If ever there was a Minister not likely to dictate to a Parliament, his noble friend was the person. Of all the Ministers he ever knew, his noble friend was the most likely to make a mighty bad dictator. But was it dictating to a Parliament—was it in any way swaying or controlling it, to call upon it to exercise calmly its judgment? The persons who were represented in that House did not expect that a Reformed Parliament would submit to the dictation of Ministers; and it would be highly presumptuous in any Ministers to attempt dictating to it; but those persons expected that the Members of a Reformed Parliament would listen to sound argument and exercise their judgment, and not adopt the delusive plans pointed out by those who ought to know better than to propose them. It was for hon. Gentlemen to contrast the arguments and objections of all parties—to weigh them well—and not vote inconsiderately, lest they might be very properly accused of making a scramble for that sort of taxation which would least affect, or more benefit, themselves. The right hon. Gentleman concluded, by calling upon hon. Members to consider the best method of honestly relieving the country from its burthens, and not whilst they were, on one hand, scrambling for a tax beneficial to themselves, scramble also for an out-of-door popularity, and the favour of constituents. Let them act as became them, and they would meet with their reward.

An *Hon. Member* said, he was anxious to explain, as early as possible, his vote of the other night, and to declare now that, notwithstanding that vote, he was inclined to support the Amendment of the noble Lord. He would tell hon. Members, that he considered he was doing his duty, as a

Member of a deliberative assembly, when he said, that his vote on Friday night last, for a reduction of the Malt-duty, was because he thought that reduction would do good to the country, and that the vote he intended to give that night for the noble Lord's Amendment was because he considered, that if the reduction of that duty was pressed, it would force Ministers to adopt what they thought they ought not to adopt, or to resign, and, consequently, injure the true interests of the country.

Colonel *Wood* said, he would trespass on the attention of the House but for a very few moments. He agreed with the hon. member for Oldham, that it was very impolitic to argue one great question against another; and, at the same time, he admitted, that, as some hon. Members were sent to that House to represent particular interests, they could not well decline representing them. When he was asked to vote for a Property-tax, he distinctly understood that he was asked to vote for an Income-tax [*Cries of "No, no!"*]. Some hon. Members near him might exclaim no, no; but he defied them to prove, that a Property-tax would not be an Income-tax. To such a tax he had a great objection, which he would state to the House. That objection was, that an Income-tax would subject every man's private transactions to the investigation of Commissioners; that the honest man's dealings would be unnecessarily exposed, whilst the dishonest man would be enabled to evade the tax, and lead the Commissioners astray. With respect to the Malt-tax, he would not hesitate to say, that it was too high, and that he was ready to take off a moiety of it, and supply that moiety by a tax on beer. The revival of the tax of *5s.* per barrel on beer would make up that moiety, and he would advise the Beer-tax to be revived before they reduced the tax on malt. He only said what he really believed would be satisfactory to the people, and beneficial to the country, when he advised the revival of the Beer-tax, and a reduction of one-half the Malt-duty. The revival of the former tax, and the reduction of the latter, would not raise the price of beer retailed by the shopkeeper, but would make malt cheaper, and enable the poor man to brew his own beer. Farmers would be benefitted by what he proposed, since they would be able to brew, at a much lower rate, the large quantities of beer they used in harvest time, and there would be also another benefit resulting from the proposition—namely, that it would go a great way in preventing the poor from frequenting beer-shops.

Mr. Serjeant *Spankie* was understood to say, that the vote of Friday night last had placed the Members of that House in a situation of great difficulty, and he wished to God that Ministers had had, on that occasion, the assistance of the eloquent speech that had been just delivered by the right hon. Gentleman on the Treasury Bench. If Government had been strengthened on that night by the aid of those who ought to assist them, they would not have met with so signal and so melancholy a defeat. He never recollected to have listened to so languid a debate as the one of that night; it seemed to be a match between the Treasury and the Country Gentlemen, of which the other Members of the House were but passive spectators. Though there might be many hon. Members for a repeal of the Malt-duty, there were many who had a horror of a Property or Income-tax, and he confessed himself one of the latter. He knew not what to say of the noble Lord's dexterity in proposing the Amendment before the House, more than that it threatened the country with a curse, and was, as it were, giving them up to the wolf when they were menaced with a Property-tax. Now, with respect to that tax, however plausible it seemed, whatever appearance of equality it seemed to carry with it, it was like all projects of equality, containing within itself the same germs of the disorder of society. Though he was well aware of the evils of an Income-tax, still he would acknowledge, that some relief ought to be given to the burthens of taxation; and, though he was prepared to vote for a repeal of the House and Window taxes, he thought nothing short of insanity could advise, as a substitute for them, an Income-tax. The minds of the people were fixed upon the House and Window taxes, and they were led to believe, that their repeal would be one of the first acts of a Reformed Parliament. There were several heavy taxes which pressed upon the metropolis, and were the cause of making trade retrograde. Those taxes did not press on the 10*l.* householders alone, but on persons who rented large houses, and were very often extremely distressed to pay them. He contended that, if the present Government was to be accused of anything, it was of its weakness—general weakness pervaded its acts; even the Attorney General did not seem to possess sufficient vigour to carry on the requisite administration of the law, and in fact it was a general complaint, that everything was in a state of pulling down. He called upon Government to act with vigour, and repress that agitation which was directed against it. On the matter of the House and Window-tax much excitement prevailed throughout the metropolis. He held in his hand two Petitions on that subject from the inhabitants of the populous borough he had the honour of representing. These Petitions were got up under a state of great excitement, and he had done, and would still continue to do, all he could to discourage that excitement. In the mean time he would advise Government to be prepared to meet with vigour the discouragement that prevailed.

Sir *John Tyrell* would not give a silent vote on the present occasion, and would state why he voted for the reduction of the duty on malt. He was sorry, however, that he could not learn, from what had fallen from the hon. and learned Serjeant, what was the substitute he proposed for the Assessed Taxes. Why he had voted for a reduction of the Malt-tax was, because he considered Ministers had not given a due consideration to the agricultural interest, and that the petitions of the landholders had not met at their hands the attention they had a right to expect. As that measure, favourable to the landed interests, came on before anything was projected in their favour, he thought it his duty to vote for it. However, in saying this, he would also say, that he went the whole length with those who thought that a Property-tax and an Income-tax were one and the same thing, and would be measures of confiscation. Since his vote for the reduction of the Malt-tax, he had seen his constituents, and their great delight at that reduction could not be mistaken. Those constituents were not Radicals nor Tories —they were ignorant of any party, but they received with pleasure the vote of Friday night, as they considered it beneficial to the country. For himself, he disclaimed the imputation of grasping at, or scrambling for, a system of taxation that would be of service to him. He was actuated by one motive, and only consulted the good of the agricultural interests. It was his intention to vote against the proposition of the hon. Baronet for the repeal of the Assessed Taxes, though, at the same time, he did not like the Amendment of the noble Lord.

Sir *Robert Peel* rose to state shortly the grounds on which he should give his vote. Although the subject opened up a discussion on the agricultural, commercial, and financial policy of the country, he should direct his attention chiefly to financial considerations. When he looked at the present state of our finances, and at the necessity of maintaining public credit—and when he found, after reductions in the expenditure, and after providing for the public service, there only remained an available surplus to meet every possible contingency which might arise of 500,000*l*; when he found that 500,000*l.* was calculated on a small increase of the revenue of last year, and that the establishments of the present year were but little lower than those of the last year, the question he had to consider was, how could further reductions of revenue be made consistently with keeping faith with the public creditor? He could not think it either expedient or just, under such circumstances, to repeal 5,000,000*l.* of additional taxes. It was true, that the repeal of the House and Window-taxes was not necessarily connected with the repeal of the half of the Malt-duty; but there was no Gentleman who heard him who would not admit, that, under the present circumstances, there was practically such a connection, and that if they repealed one half of the Malt-duty, the pressure for the repeal of the House and Window-tax would be so great that it would not be possible to resist it. But many Gentlemen thought the repeal of the half only of the Malt-duty would be unavailing. They argued, that the relief would be partial and incomplete; that an expensive establishment for collecting the remaining half must be kept up; that the inquisition into the manufacturers' processes, which at present was so vexatious, must be preserved, and, therefore, it was said it would be better to repeal the whole. If there were any force in that argument, the whole amount of the taxes to be repealed was not 6,800,000*l.*, as had been stated by the hon. member for Worcester, but 7,300,000*l.* The total amount of the Malt-tax last year was 4,800,000*l.*; the amount of the House and Window-duty was 2,500,000*l.*; and if they repealed both, therefore, that would entail a reduction of the revenue of not less than 7,300,000*l.* The hon. member for Middlesex said, that the Government might make reductions in every branch of the public service, and by these means, reduce the expenditure and prevent a deficiency. But let it be remembered, that they had already voted the Army Estimates—they had voted the amount of the Naval force—they had voted part of the Ordnance Estimates, and he considered it impossible, since the House had agreed to those votes, to look for any reduction in expenditure equal to supply the deficiency. The hon. Member said, make reductions; yes, make reductions in the expenditure first, and then reduce taxation. Would the hopes and security of the public creditor, when he saw a large deficit, be satisfied by a vague assurance that the House might ultimately reduce three millions of the expenditure? If they repealed the taxes proposed, they would injure public credit irreparably. With respect to rescinding the vote of the other evening, he thought it far better to rescind that vote than to adhere to it if it were unwise. He saw no dignity in persevering in error. The question was, whether the vote were consistent with the good of the country, and if it were not, how could it be contended, that they were precluded from rescinding it? The argument against rescinding this vote would apply to the rejection of a bill on a third reading which had been read a second time. It was said, that if they rescinded this vote they would have many other questions, upon which the opinion of the House had been once expressed, re-agitated; but the only reason why those questions were not agitated now, was, not from respect for previous decisions, but from apprehensions of a second, and, perhaps, more signal failure. He repeated, that the repeal of the half of the Malt-duty carried with it the repeal of the whole; and if the whole duty were repealed, and the House and Window-tax were repealed, they would not be able to satisfy the public creditor; for it was a perfect delusion to suppose that the deficiency could be made up by increased consumption and by a reduction of expenditure. The only alternative, then, was a Property-tax, to which he was decidedly opposed. He would not pledge himself beyond the present occasion; but he would say, that in the present circumstances of the country, and at the present period of the Session, either a Property or an Income tax would be a great calamity. He knew that some persons contended for a tax on property who would not tolerate a tax on income. He could not recognize the justice of such a distinction. He considered that it would be establishing a principle of spoliation to tax property, and exempt income from the tax. He would take the case of a man, who, by frugality and industry, had amassed a fortune of 10,000*l.*, which he had vested in the funds; he would suppose that the man had two sons, on whose education he had bestowed much care and great expense; and that these two sons, in consequence of that education and paternal care, were making large professional incomes, were the two sons to escape a contribution to which the father was to be subject? The father had, perhaps, by self-denial, by the application of all that he could spare from a limited pecuniary income, enabled the sons to acquire an income ten-fold greater than his own. Why should the father alone be called upon to contribute to the exigences of the State? If a Property-tax were imposed, there must also be an Income-tax. If either were imposed, there must be a rigorous inquisition into every man's property, as a necessary concomitant. He would not say, that circumstances might not arise, in war, or even in peace, to justify such a tax; but, in the present circumstances of the country, he could not think it politic to levy an Income-tax; the effect of which must be, if it were justly levied, to expose every man's business to a rigorous inquisition. It was a tax which, unaccompanied by severe and unsparing scrutiny into private affairs, would encourage fraud and perjury. Setting aside the circumstance that, generally speaking, it was better to submit to taxes already established than have recourse to others, he must say, that a Property-tax would be most injurious. The tax upon Houses and Windows was not, in his opinion, a bad tax. If unjustly apportioned, let that injustice be redressed. In principle it was not bad; and the inequality complained of was not necessarily incident to it. The amount of income might be concealed; but men could not conceal the value of a house, or the number of windows. In principle, he did not know a tax more free from objection. If any county or district were unfairly taxed, let the other counties bear their fair proportion. The hon. member for Lincolnshire (Mr. Heathcote), had made a very patriotic speech to-night; for he had proved, that the farmers of Lincolnshire escaped almost entirely the House and Window-tax. Let us profit then by this avowal of the member for Lincolnshire, and take care that his constituents escape the tax no longer. The learned Serjeant (Serjeant Spankie) had spoken in favour of indirect taxation, which certainly was a good species of taxation, because persons incurred it voluntarily, and could apportion their expenses to the tax; but it might be carried too far. It had limits, beyond which it gave rise to smuggling, and defeated the object in view. If he had in his possession the produce of a Property-tax amounting to 7,300,000*l.*, he was by no means sure, that he would select as the first taxes for reduction the Malt-duty, and the House and Window duties. There were other duties, the removal of which might confer greater benefits on the country, and spread those benefits more equally over the agricultural and commercial interests of the country, and over the different classes of agricultural interests, over the growers of oats and the graziers, as well as over the growers of barley. But his main objection, he repeated, to the repeal of these taxes was, that it could not be done and preserve faith with the public creditor, unless an Income-tax were imposed. He knew that it was a popular notion with many persons, not only that a tax might be laid on Property, but from which income might escape; that the tax on Property might be a graduated tax, and made very productive. Let them be assured, however, if they applied a graduated Property-tax, that the principle would admit of no limitation; that they would discourage industry, and induce capitalists to transfer their capital to other countries. The hope of dishonest gains would defeat itself. A graduated Property-tax would lessen the stimulus to honest exertion in future, and force men to seek other countries for the deposit of their hard-earned accumulations. For these reasons he should oppose the Motion of the hon. Baronet, and vote for the Motion of the noble Lord.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, that the right hon. Baronet thought only of one class of public creditors—those who had money in the funds—but he forgot that more numerous class of public creditors to whom the House owed freed institutions. The House owed it to the people to relieve them from some of their burthens—to remit a large part of the taxation. With the people faith ought to be kept; and the House might keep faith with them, by reducing the establishments. By that he believed that the House might keep faith with both; but, as it went on at present, it would in the long run keep faith with neither. The right hon. Baronet said, that they could not reduce the taxation, because the Army was voted, and the Navy was voted. But when they were asked to rescind the vote for the reduction of taxation, why not rescind those votes? Was the House to rescind no other votes than those which were favourable to the people? By voting against the Motion of the hon. Baronet, they would pledge themselves to support the noble Lord's Budget, and that had given small satisfaction either in the House or out of the House. They informed the people, too, that they were to have no relief from the burthens of the House and Window-tax. It was most desirable that they should consider what might be the consequence of that. They should remember that to-morrow, when the newspapers informed the public of their decision, what the noble Earl now in the other House said before the Reform Bill was passed—namely, that he would pay no taxes, might find a million of people ready to act upon it. If the people refused to pay the taxes, the fundholder would not be secure; then would they rescind the only favourable vote they had yet come to for the people? For three months they had done nothing for them, and now that they had done something they were to undo it. He did not see the necessity of a Property-tax to supply the place of the taxes it was proposed to reduce. It was their business to begin by reducing taxation, and leave the Gentlemen opposite to find out the means of supplying themselves or reducing the expenditure. He wished to strike down the taxes, and to teach the Ministers to practise economy. It was neither necessary to have a Property-tax, nor keep on the present taxes; but the Ministers seemed to wish to lay on a Property-tax and keep on the present taxes. It was said that if they impose an Income-tax, it must extend to all parts of the country—to Ireland. That was meant to catch the Irish Members; but would they be so unjust as to take off a tax from England, a tax which Ireland did not pay, and impose a general tax, which she did pay?

He wished to see an Income-tax in Ireland, but they would never be so unjust as to relieve England of 2,000,000*l.* and impose a part of that on Ireland. He implored the House to look at the effect their vote was likely to have on the people, and to give them this boon. If they voted against the Repeal of the House and Window-tax, if they told the people they were to have no diminution of their burthens, they would shut the door against hope, and bid them be content with the present miserable budget.

Sir Samuel Whalley moved the adjournment of the debate.

Lord *Althorp* appealed to the hon. Member whether it would be fair or just to press his Amendment, considering the situation in which his Majesty's Ministers would be placed, if the House did not come to a decision on this point. He was well aware that he had given but very short notice of this proposition; but the reason was, the absolute necessity which presented itself, after the majority of Friday night, that a final decision should be come to as soon as possible. He, therefore, trusted that the hon. Member would suffer the House to go to a division.

Sir *Samuel Whalley* had no desire to embarrass Ministers; but still he must say that this vital question—a question intimately involving the immediate interests of a million and a half of people in one metropolis, ought to have the most mature consideration, and as yet he had by no means heard sufficient discussion on the subject [*Uproar—" Go on."*] He would proceed, then, to speak to the question, since that appeared to be the wish of the House, and in so doing he would not detain the House long. He had risen for this purpose at least twenty times; and he saw many Gentlemen round him who were equally anxious to declare their sentiments on this all-important subject, and this had been his sole reason for wishing more time to be allowed for discussion. He believed that if he had been present on Friday evening he should have given his support to Ministers, because the Malt-tax not being, in his opinion, one of those taxes which pressed most heavily upon the people in general, it appeared to him that it would be more eligible to do away with some other tax, which did more immediately press upon the nation at large. The real question at issue was, whether the Metropolis was or was not to bear the very large portion of an assessment, from which most other places were, in a great measure, exempt. In putting the question thus, he was far from entertaining any desire that the country gentlemen should be called upon to bear an unequal share of the public burthens. What he desired to see was, equality of taxation throughout all interests. Several hon. Members had asserted that the Metropolis was not more burthened with house and window assessments than other parts of the country. These hon. Members must have been labouring under a very strange misconception, and would acknowledge it when he informed them, on the strength of indisputable parliamentary and other documents, that the Metropolis alone paid a greater amount of these taxes than twenty-four counties put together, although the population was only one-third that of those twenty-four counties. The hon. member for Lincolnshire took the lead in insulting the great constituencies by thus supporting this odious tax, merely because it was only triflingly felt by his own constituency. The House and Window-taxes were, in the worst sense of the word, Property and Income-taxes; for where a man had 100*l.* a-year they took away 5*l.* of it. The same objection did not appear to prevail in regard to the Window as to the House-tax; and if the noble Lord had come down prepared to Repeal the latter, the discontent would not have been so great as it was, though the people would by no means have been altogether satisfied. Some of the hon. Members had seemed to argue, that though the metropolis might be called upon to bear the higher portion of assessment it could well afford it, and talked of the rich merchants and wealthy people of all ranks and sorts who lived in it: these hon. Members spoke as if all the inhabitants of London were rich lords and gentlemen; let them make an impartial circuit through London and the environs, and they would find whole streets where the people were even starving, destitute of food or raiment; and they would find, too, that the middle classes were in that extreme state of depression generally which rendered it not possible for them to pay their taxes. He himself had presented several petitions from various bodies of his constituents, which all were to the effect that the people would not, because they could not, any longer pay their taxes. He was not prepared to vote for an Income-tax, but was quite willing to support a tax on land and real property. He by no means concurred with the right hon. member for Tamworth and others, in supposing that a Property-tax must necessarily include an Income-tax. Nor did he at all see that there would be any violation of faith in making the public creditor pay his proportion towards the support of Government. The hon. Members who represented the agricultural counties would not support the Repeal of the House and Window-tax, [*cries of "No, no," from some hon. Members.*] The hon. member for Cambridge stated the total number of houses assessed with a view to show that the metropolis did not bear an undue portion of the tax. He stated the number of houses assessed at 377,471, but he should recollect that of that number there was 136,194 assessed as farm houses, and, therefore, not subject to this tax. Therefore the number of houses subject to this tax was 242,000 of which number 116,234 were houses assessed in the metropolis. The whole rental of the country was 11,154,000*l.* of which not less than 5,143,000*l.* was assessed as the proportion of the metropolis. If any hon. Member could point out any other tax which bore so unequally upon any other portion or interest of the community, he would be one of the first of the Metropolitan Representatives to advocate its Repeal. He denied the assertion which had been made, that London and Liverpool were the only places that made any stir about the House and Window-tax: so far from this being the case, there had been not less than sixty petitions presented from various great towns in the country, Birmingham, Norwich, Coventry, Brighton, Bristol, Bath, Edinburgh, &c. There were no grounds for continuing these abominable taxes. It was quite impossible for him to give a silent vote on this question, which he was compelled to say would be against Ministers: he was in some points sorry for this; but deep as was his gratitude to the Government for the measure which had brought him among others into Parliament, his duty was still greater to his constituents, and, therefore, when the alternative was offered, he could not hesitate. He thanked the Ministry for the alterations they had made in their financial plan; for as to the original propositions with reference to reduction, they were a mere mockery and insult on the people. He himself should wish to have the assessments made at a graduated scale. Let those who have most pay most, and not least.

Sir *Francis Burdett* would address the House as briefly as he could on this occasion. His hon. colleague having been placed in a situation in which he conceived himself called upon, from a due regard to his own character, and from a due regard to what he considered the public interests, to resign the situation which he held under his Majesty's Government, he had also vacated his seat. His hon. colleague feeling, that he could not give Government, on this occasion, that support which it was important to give it without a sacrifice of public character and consistency, which, he thought, would be a course detrimental to the public service, and that his doing so would render his opinions liable to so much misinterpretation, as to more than counterbalance any benefit to be derived from his remaining in power, had, under those circumstances, considered it his duty to resign his situation under Government, and his seat in that House. He was not placed on this occasion under circumstances of quite so difficult a nature. He held no public situation connected with the Ministry, and, therefore, his course of proceeding, on this occasion, could not possibly be attributed to motives of self-interest. He should have no difficulty in fearlessly stating the course which he intended to pursue. He had, when this matter had been first given notice of by the worthy Alderman, determined to vote for his Motion; but he was determined then to vote for it, because his constituents were anxious for the repeal of this tax, conceiving that it was partial and unjust, and oppressive in its operation upon them; but now the question had assumed a more important shape. The question now was, if they repealed this tax, where could they find a substitute for it so as to supply the deficiency thus created in the revenue? He thought, that it devolved on those who advocated the repeal of the tax to show how the deficiency in the revenue could be made good to the Government, so as to support the public service of the country. The question of the repeal of the House and Window-tax now stood in a very different situation from what it did in the first instance. They had now three questions before them; whether, in the first place, the vote respecting the Malt-tax should be rescinded or not. Now, that that vote should be rescinded, and that it never ought to have been passed under the circumstances that it was, he had no doubt; but as it had passed, and as the carrying of another vote for the repeal of the House and Window-tax would create a great deficiency in the revenue, the noble Lord proposed, as the third question, the alternative of a Property-tax, in case the House should determine to reduce the two former taxes. Without giving any opinion adverse to a Property-tax as a general measure, he must say, that, at this moment, they could not adopt such a change in the taxation of the country consistently with a due regard to the interests of the country, to the revenue, and to the welfare of the people. In his mind, however, though it was impossible that they could adopt such a change at the present moment, though he was bound to say, merely as a theorist, that it appeared to him there could be no tax more proper or more equal than a Property-tax, but so many practical men had started such apparently well-founded difficulties, that he must beg leave to suspend his judgment as to now adopting it. The House was not ripe for coming to a decision at that moment. It was not able to determine at will, on that question, and without full inquiry, how far the tax so proposed as a substitute would supply the deficiency of 6,000,000*l.* or 7,000,000*l.* thus created in the revenue. The plain question, therefore, now before the House was this: the Government having said, that it was impossible, in the present state of the Session and of the House, to give up the amount of the House and Window-tax, the vote they were called upon to give was, whether the Government of the country was to be supported or not. Under such circumstances, feeling not only that gratitude to them which the hon. member for Marylebone had expressed for passing the Reform Bill, but also thinking that, independent of that, they were the honestest Administration that we ever had, unswayed as they were by private motives, and solely desirous to promote the good of the country, it was his opinion, that every honest man was called upon to give them his support. He did not see how their places could be supplied. There had been a great variety of opinions about the currency question; now, he was not going to give any decided opinion himself, though he was one of the "currency doctors;" but he put it to the House whether there must not be some peculiarity in the state of the country, when, after a long peace, when, since the war every Ministry had acted on the principle of reduction—when it was considered, that, at this time, not less than thirty-four millions of taxes had been taken off—when, notwithstanding all this, there clearly appeared to be an almost unexampled, a universal, pressure, he put it to the House, whether it must not strike any plain man that there must be some peculiar reason for all this? The fact was, that the contraction of the income of the country rendered it almost impossible to meet the demands upon it. Everybody was bitterly complaining. People were herding together in poverty and misery; cold and hunger were doing their worst; five or six people were obliged to sleep together on the floor, with no covering, but a single blanket; and he would leave the House to judge, whether there must not be a strong contention among the six which should have the most of the blanket. The country was like the unfortunate people with only half a covering. One was tugging it on this side, and another was tugging to get a share on that. The fortunate thought they had got only their proper share, and felt no gratitude, while the unfortunate were filled with anger and resentment at their sufferings. In reply to what had fallen from the learned member for Dublin, he maintained, that the noblemen and gentlemen of Ireland had an equal right to bear such a burthen as the noblemen and gentry of England. He did not for a moment mean to deny, but that there existed considerable distress in Ireland; but this was among those who would not be subject to the Income-tax. At the same time the House should call to mind that no country had made larger strides towards prosperity than Ireland had in the last thirty or forty years; the only thing was, that the advance of population was more than commensurate. He felt, he said, in this situation on this occasion, that either he must support Ministers, or run the risk of subverting the present Administration. The hon. member for Middlesex was the only Member to suggest a source for supplying the deficiency that would be occasioned by taking off those taxes, but he did not think the hon. Member's project a safe one. It was perfectly unreasonable to demand of the Chancellor of the Exchequer such a sacrifice of revenue without the means being pointed out by which it could be supplied. He trusted, however, that the Government and the Legislature would, without delay, enter upon the question of a general revision of taxation. In the course of such inquiry, if particular taxes were found to press peculiarly upon particular interests, they should be, and would be, no doubt, removed. He repeated his hope, that Ministers would speedily enter upon such inquiry, and, either by the substitution of a Property-tax or some other means, get rid of taxes that peculiarly pressed upon the industrious classes of the community.

Lord *Sandon* said, a petition had been presented from a respectable body of his constituents, praying for the repeal of the House and Window-tax; but great as was the duty he owed them, he owed a higher duty to the country. He could not, for the sake of relieving them from this burthen, throw into jeopardy the public revenue, and the means of sustaining the credit of the country. The real evil felt at present was not so much the amount of taxation as the want of confidence. It was that species of taxation upon enterprise and productive industry, arising from political and commercial causes, that principally afflicted the country. If the vote of that night went to reduce the revenue to the extent of 7,000,000*l.* or 8,000,000*l.*, without any obvious source to meet such a deficiency, it would paralyze every branch of industry, by diffusing a universal want of confidence, and that public credit, without which all industry flagged, and all commerce ended, and which it should be their great object to maintain, would be irretrievably shaken.

Mr. *Harvey* said, if the House would extend its indulgence to him, he could assure Gentlemen, that he would detain them but for a very few minutes. The right hon. Baronet had stated, that the Government, by these latter proceedings, were placed in a situation of great embarrassment. It was so, he admitted; but it should be observed, that the Government had placed themselves in that unpleasant situation. The three propositions then before the House were unquestionably calculated to throw Ministers into an extraordinary position. He did not blame them for seeking a new decision with respect to the Motion which had recently been carried, because he conceived that no decision was worthy of approbation that would not stand the test of a re-decision. That which was done suddenly, and by surprise, was worth but little, in his opinion, if it would not bear to be re-considered. But he wanted some explanation from the noble Lord as to what he meant by declaring in his Amendment, "that it was not, at present, expedient to adopt a tax on property and income." The right hon. member for Tamworth had taken a definite ground, and argued, that such an impost was not to be resorted to, unless under the extremest and most pressing circumstances. The right hon. Member admitted, however, that circumstances might arise which would call on Parliament to agree to this tax. What, then, he would ask, were the circumstances of the country now? But the right hon. Member had argued, that it would be inexpedient, at this late period of the Session, to resort to this tax. Now, he would say, that, for all practical purposes, they were in the very infancy of the Session. What had Parliament done during the present sitting, so far as the public interest was concerned? The Government, from which they had been taught to expect so much, had, it appeared, gone to the full measure of relief. It was evident that, with respect to the Malt-tax, the House and Window-tax, or any other tax, it was not intended to take such a view of the situation of the people as would lead to any solid and substantial reduction. So far as the views of Government appeared, they went directly to negative the just expectations of the people. It had been made a strong ground of objection, that those who advocated the present Motion had not thrown out any suggestion as to the mode by which the produce of the tax, if repealed, was to be replaced. Now, he never knew, in such cases, any substitute proposed that was not found fault with; and it was rather a new doctrine, that those who called for the removal of any tax should find an equivalent for it. According to that doctrine, they were all to become Chancellors of the Exchequer without any salary. With respect to the propriety of a Property-tax, he would quote the opinion of a living authority—not the authority of Mr. Huskisson or of Mr. Ricardo—but that of the right hon. Gentleman, the Vice-President of the Board of Trade. In 1830, a few months previous to his accession to the office which he now filled, in speaking of a Property-tax, he used these words, "that, with sufficient security, and under proper limitations, such a change in the mode of taxation would be beneficial in the highest degree."* All the Members who now wished for this tax, were denounced as visionaries; and yet, here they were told by a distinguished individual, a Gentleman connected with the financial department of the Government, that, "with sufficient security and proper limitations," the Property-tax was a desirable one. Were they, then, who, on the present occasion, favoured this tax, to suggest "the proper limitations?" It surely was the duty of the Cabinet, and not of those who were unconnected with the Government, to undertake that task. Still he thought, that there was no great difficulty in it. The deficit might be laid on the Crown lands. They might be made the primary security for 7,000,000*l.* of money. It was perfectly clear to him, that the Government had gone its full length in its nominal reformation of the expenditure, and that it could go no further. Some Gentlemen said, that if a Property-tax were levied, it would not last six months. Such was the general abhorrence in which it was held, that hon. Members declared, that the payment of the tax would be decidedly refused. But from whom would that refusal come? From those who were to pay it? What! would the landlords of England—would those who had pledged their lives and fortunes to sustain the Constitution of the country—would they be so rebellious--would they be so jacobinical—as to demur against the payment of this impost? It was an insult to the pride of the country to imagine any such refractory feeling. The hon. member for Westminster talked of the blanket which was insufficient to cover all those who were struggling to obtain a share of it. But he forgot, that, under the centre of the blanket, there were some persons lying snugly enough, while all those at the extremities were almost ready to tear each other to pieces for a little warmth and a little covering.

Lord *John Russell* observed, that the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just spoken, wished to know what was the meaning of the terms "it is not 'at present' expedient to adopt a tax on income and property," which were contained in his noble friend's Amendment. He would suppose that this particular tax was recommended by his right hon. friend, the Vice-President of the Board of Trade three years ago; but the question was, what was the situation of Government at present? He concurred entirely with the hon. member for Liverpool, that Ministers ought, in all their proceedings, to endeavour to establish a feeling of confidence throughout the country. He admitted that the resources of the country might be swelled out by a variety of schemes, but, in the end, he believed, that disappointment and vexation would be the consequence of those schemes. Let the House look at the important subjects which now necessarily occupied the attention of Government. There was the Bank charter—there was the East-India Company's charter—there was the consideration of the state of their subjects in the West Indies. It was at such a time as this that they were called on to alter the whole financial system of the country. Those who called for an Income-tax, by getting rid of various other taxes, ought to pause before they loosened the whole financial system of the country. They ought to consider well before they proposed that which, instead of assisting the revenue and relieving the country, might end in disappointment and discontent. A gentleman who had written a book on the subject of this tax, had enumerated no less than eight different schemes respecting it. The choice between these various plans would surely require the most grave consideration; and, after all, not one of them might be found to answer. He therefore had decided to support the resolution of his noble friend. Looking abstractedly to the benefit likely to be derived from a tax on income and property, he thought that it would not be right, at the present moment, to adopt such an impost. It appeared to him, that such a course of proceeding would be unwise; but if a tax of that nature were to be imposed, it ought not to be to the amount of only a few millions,—no, it ought to be laid on to such an extent as would give an effectual spring to the industry of the country. The hon. and learned member for Dublin had exclaimed against the injustice of extending this tax to Ireland. Now, feeling every commiseration for Ireland, he must say, that, in future, if it were found necessary to levy this tax, it should apply to Ireland as well as to England.

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* Hansard (new series) xxiii. p. 876.

Dr. *Lushington* rose, amidst considerable confusion. He begged of the House to recollect the situation in which he and other Gentlemen stood, who represented metropolitan boroughs. He hoped, therefore, that the House would permit him to state the grounds on which he voted on the present occasion. Had the Motion of the hon. and worthy Alderman been made before Friday last, he (Dr. Lushington) should certainly have voted for it; for, in the district which he represented, there was so much suffering and calamity, the inhabitants were so overwhelmed by a diminution of trade, and by other difficulties, that it was his firm conviction, that it would be all but impossible for them to pay the House and Window-tax in the present year. Such was the state of the population of that district, that there were persons earning only eight, nine, or ten shillings a week, who were nevertheless liable to pay the House and Window-tax for the houses they inhabited. But he had only the choice of two evils; and the question which he asked himself was, which was the less evil to inflict on his unfortunate constituents? It was proposed to add the repeal of the House and Window-tax to the repeal of the Malt-duty, and to supply the deficiency in the revenue by a Property-tax. Now, which would be the greater evil? To continue the House and Window-tax, modified, as his noble friend proposed to modify it, and the Malt-duty, which was not very sensibly felt by his constituents, or to impose a Property or Income-tax, without any defined limitations, without ascertaining how it was likely to operate; with no guide as to the manner in which it would be received, other than the melancholy experience of the detestation and horror with which it had formerly been considered by the greater portion of the people as the most inquisitorial imposition that ever existed. He, for one, had voted for the Motion of the hon. member for Worcester. If that Motion had been carried, and a Committee had been appointed, the result would have been a report, showing one of two things—either that a Property-tax was practicable, under certain limitations and restrictions, or that it was impracticable altogether. In voting for his noble friend's Amendment, he was aware that he should lose all his power in the district which he had the honour to represent, and that he was sacrificing himself to a sense of duty. He agreed with the right hon. member for Tamworth (Sir Robert Peel), that they ought never to forget the celebrated passage of Burke, which the right hon. Baronet had then quoted, and for himself, please God, he never would forget it; and if, at any period, it was the duty of Members of that House to oppose themselves to the will of their constituents, it was ten thousand times more so at a period like the present, when they had, for the greater part, such numerous constituencies at their backs. If they did not obey the dictates of their conscience, and of their sober and deliberate judgment, they would become the mere puppets of their constituents. He was determined that his own judgment should be his guide, and that no earthly power should induce him to act in contradiction to its dictates. He had one motive more for the course which he was pursuing, and which he would honestly avow. He had been, for seven-and-twenty years, attached to his friends who now held the reins of Government; and he should rue it as the greatest mischief that could befal the country, if they, and especially his noble friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, were to retire from office. It would give him the deepest pain if any vote of his should contribute to so melancholy a catastrophe; convinced as he was, without meaning to disparage any other individual, that it would be most difficult to find a substitute for his noble friend of equal honesty and integrity.

Mr. *William Brougham* would not take up the time of the House for five minutes. He also was placed in a situation of great difficulty. The hon. Gentleman might sneer, but he little knew what it was to see the extraordinary distress which prevailed among the hundred thousand persons in the district which he had the honour to represent,—to know that they believed that distress would be greatly alleviated by the repeal of the House and Window-tax,—to feel that although, under other circumstances, he would support the repeal to the utmost of his ability, and yet to find himself so placed, that, as an honest man, he must vote against the proposition. He had been returned to that House on no pledges. All that he had assured his constituents was, that he would vote honestly.

If the proposition were singly for the repeal of the House and Window-tax, he should feel no hesitation in supporting it. But taking the repeal of that tax in connexion with the repeal of the Malt-duty, the question arose if they could do without it. If not, Government would be placed in a situation of great difficulty. Had the Government a surplus to the deficit which would be occasioned by the hon. Alderman's motion? It was clear that they had not. The surplus amounted only to 1,500,000*l.*; and, by the vote of Friday evening, added to the vote of this evening, if the proposition were agreed to, the deficit would amount to no less than 5,000,000*l.* Under the existing circumstances, he could not vote for the repeal of any tax until an adequate substitute had been provided. In supporting his noble friend's Amendment, however, he pledged himself no further than to vote for the inexpediency of repealing those taxes, and imposing a Property-tax at the present moment; leaving it perfectly open for the future, to consider whether a Property-tax, under proper limitations, might not be advantageously adopted.

Mr. *Tennyson* rose, amidst cries of "Question! question!" It had not been his intention to say a single word; but it seemed to be expected that all the Representatives of the Metropolitan districts should explain the reasons of their vote. As the Representative of a large constituency, he felt entitled to express his sentiments; and if hon. Gentlemen persisted in interrupting him, he would move an adjournment. In the vote he should give, he would follow the dictate of his own judgment, for no man was more averse from giving pledges on any subject than he was. He thought that those who voted for a large reduction of taxation without being prepared to support the imposition of a Property-tax, which was allowed to be the only substitute for the taxes to be taken off, were not acting with any regard to consistency. He himself was an advocate for the imposition of a Property-tax. He thought it was calculated to give a spring to the industry of the people. Upon the representation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, many hon. Gentlemen had postponed Motions which were intended to relieve the burthens of the people until the Budget was brought forward, and now, when that event had taken place, what relief was promised? Merely a few paltry items of taxation were proposed to be taken off. It was his intention to vote for the proposition of the hon. Baronet, and he could but express his surprise that a different course should have been adopted by the hon. Baronet, the member for Westminster, (Sir Francis Burdett), who, while he approved of a Property-tax, and was pledged to support the repeal of the Assessed-taxes, voted against the Motion of the hon. Baronet, the member for the City of London.

Mr. *Leech* said, that it was absurd to say that the Ministers had been taken by surprise. He saw no reason why he should alter the vote which he had given on Friday.

The House divided on the Question that the words proposed by Lord Althorp to be left out stand part of the question —Ayes 157: Noes 355: Majority 198.

Mr. *Hume* declared that after the overwhelming majority against the repeal of the Malt-tax and the House and Window-duties, he should not feel himself justified in pressing his Amendment on the main question to a division; and he would therefore withdraw it.

Sir *William Ingilby* complained of the manner in which the question of the repeal of the Malt-duty had been smothered under that of the House and Window-duties. He thought the House ought to decide directly whether it would rescind the Motion of Friday. For that purpose he would move, as an Amendment on Lord Althorp's Motion which was then the main question, that all the words relating to the Malt-duty should be omitted.

Mr. *Henry Handley*: The noble Lord had complained of the embarrassment in which he had been placed; but the Members of that House, also, had been placed in great embarrassment. Thinking he understood the English language, he had believed the noble Lord would have been the last man in the House to say what he did not mean. On Friday night, after the debate, he went down to his constituents, and told them that half the Malt-duty had been repealed. He was in the market the following day—he saw the joyous countenances of the farmers—he saw what had not been seen for some time—smiles upon their countenances—and he came back instructed to ask the noble Lord whether he would take the duty off stock in hand. If the noble Lord proposed thus cavalierly [*"no, no!" "yes, yes!"*]. He said, thus cavalierly to rescind the Motion to which the House came the other night, he would add fearfully to the despondency and despair which already existed.

Mr. *Baring* said, if the House intended to rescind the Resolution, they should do it with something like decency and propriety. The Question should be settled by a formal Resolution.

Sir *Thomas Freemantle* said, that though he had not voted for the Resolution on Friday, yet, considering how much the feeling of the people had been excited by the vote to which they then came, he should support that vote. They were bound to keep the promises which they had made to the people.

Sir *William Ingilby* declared he would press his Amendment to a division. He had hitherto supported the present Administration, but, from their conduct on this occasion all the confidence which he had hitherto had in them was destroyed.

The House divided on the Question that the words proposed to be left out stand part of the question—Ayes 285; Noes 131: Majority 154.

Main Question agreed to.

Sir William Ingilby moved, that leave be given to bring in a Bill pursuant to the Resolution respecting the Duties on Malt passed on Friday last, upon which the House again divided—Ayes 76; Noes 238: Majority 162.*

A List of the AYES *on the First Division.*

Aglionby, H. A.
Attwood, M.
Attwood, T.
Baillie, J. E.
Bainbridge, E. T.
Barnard, E. G.
Barnett, C. J.
Bayntun, S. A.
Beauclerk, Major
Beaumont, T. W.
Bell, M.
Berkeley, Hon. C. F.
Bewes, T.
Bish, T.
Blackstone, W. S.
Blamire, W.
Blandford, Marq. of
Bowes, J.
Brocklehurst, J.
Brodie, Capt.
Brotherton, J.
Buckingham, J. S.

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* We think it right to subjoin here the official report of these complicated divisions. The following are the entries in the journals.

HOUSE AND WINDOW TAX.—Motion made and question proposed,—"That it is expedient to grant relief to his Majesty's subjects by repealing that portion of the Assessed taxes charged on inhabited houses and windows:"—Amendment proposed to leave out from the word "that" to the end of the question, in order to add the words "the deficiency in the revenue which would be occasioned by a reduction of the tax on Malt to 10*s*. the quarter, and by the repeal of the tax on houses and windows, could only be supplied by the substitution of a general tax on property and income, and an extensive change in our whole financial system, which would at present be inexpedient:"—Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the question."

Question put: the House divided; Ayes 157, Noes 355. Question proposed, "That the words 'the deficiency in the revenue which would be occasioned by a reduction of the tax on Malt to 10*s*. the quarter, and by the repeal of the tax on houses and windows, could only be supplied by the substitution of a general tax on property and income, and an extensive change in our whole financial system, which would at present be inexpedient,' be added to the word 'that.'" Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, to leave out all the words after the word "windows," and add the words "ought and can be provided for by every possible reduction in the establishments and expenditure of the country: and if that should prove insufficient to meet the deficiency, the amount to be raised by the substitution of new taxes that should bear less heavily on the industry of the country than the Malt and House and Window taxes have borne." Amendment, by leave, withdrawn. Another Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, to leave out the words "by a reduction of the tax on malt to 10*s*. the quarter," and—question put, "That those words stand part of the said proposed Amendment:"—The House divided: Ayes 285, Noes 131. Question, "That the words 'the deficiency in the revenue which would be occasioned by a reduction of the tax on malt to 10*s*. the quarter, and by the repeal of the tax on houses and windows could only be supplied by the substitution of a general tax on property and income, and an extensive change in our whole financial system, which would at present be inexpedient,' be added to the word 'that' in the original question:" put, and agreed to. Main question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Resolved,—That the deficiency in the revenue which would be occasioned by a reduction of the tax on Malt to 10*s*. the quarter and by the repeal of the tax on houses and windows, could only be supplied by the substitution of a general tax on property and income, and an extensive change in our whole financial system, which would at present be inexpedient.

MALT.—Resolution (26th of April) read as follows:—

Resolved,—"That it is the opinion of this House that the duty upon malt be reduced to 10*s*. the quarter."

Motion made, and question put, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill pursuant to the said Resolution." The House divided: Ayes 76; Noes 238.

Bulwer, E. L.
Burrell, Sir C.
Byng, G.
Chandos, Marquess of
Chaplin, Col. J.
Chetwynd, Capt. W. F.
Chichester, J. P. B.
Clay, W.
Clayton, W. R.
Collier, J.
Cookes, T. H.
Crawley, S.
Curteis, Capt. E. B.
Dare, R. W. H.
Dawson, E.
Denison, W. J.
Dundas, Capt. J. W.
Ellis, W.
Etwall, R.
Ewart, W.
Faithfull, G.
Fancourt, Major
Fellowes, H. A.
Fellowes, Hon. N.
Fenton, John
Ferguson, G. R. N.
Finn, W. F.
Fitzsimon, C.
Fryer, Rich.
Gaskell, D.
Gillon, W. D.
Godson, R.
Goring, H. D.
Greene, T. G.
Gronow, Capt. R. H.
Grote, G.
Halcomb, J.
Hall, B.
Handley, B.
Handley, Henry
Hanmer, H.
Hardy, J.
Harvey, D. W.
Henniker, Lord
Hill, M. D.
Hodges, T. L.
Hoskins, K.
Hotham, Lord
Hughes, H.
Hume, J.
Humphery, J.
Hutt, W.
Irton, S.
Ingilby, W. A.
Jervis, J.
Jolliffe, Col. H.
Kemp, T. R.
Kerrison, Sir E.
Key, Sir J.
Lalor, P.
Langton, Col. G.
Leech, John
Lennox, Lord A.
Lennox, Lord W.
Lister, C.
Lloyd, J. H.
Locke, W.
Lowther, C. H.
Lowther, Viscount
Lyall, G.
Maxwell, Sir J.
Methuen, P.
Miller, W. H.
Molesworth, W. H.
O'Brien, C.
O'Connell, D.
O'Connell, M.
O'Connell, C.
O'Connell, J.
O'Connell, Morgan
Oswald, R. A.
Palmer, Gen.
Palmer, C. F.
Palmer, Robert
Parker, Sir H.
Parrott, J.
Pease, J.
Penleaze, T. S.
Petre, Hon. E.
Phillips, M.
Phillpotts, J.
Pigot, R.
Plumptre, J. P.
Pollock, F.
Potter, R.
Poulter, J.
Ramsbottom, J.
Richards, J.
Rider, J.
Rippon, C.
Robinson, G. R.
Roche, W.
Roe, James
Roebuck, J. A.
Russell, C.
Ruthven, E. S.
Ruthven, E.
Scale, Col.
Sharpe, M.
Shaw, R. N.
Sinclair, G.
Spankie, Sergeant
Spry, S. T.
Stanley, E.
Staunton, G. P.
Stewart, J.
Thompson, Ald.
Tancred, H. W.
Tapps, G. W.
Tayleure, W.
Tennyson, C.
Tollemache, Hon. A.
Tooke, W.
Torrens, R.
Townshend, Lord C.
Turner, W.
Tynte, C. J. K.
Vigors, N. A.
Wallace, R.
Walter, John
Wason, R.
Watkins, J. L.
Whalley, Sir S.
Wigney, J. N.
Williams, Col. G.
Wilmot, Sir J. E. B.
Windham, W. H.
Wood, M.
Wyndham, W.
Young, G.

List of the NOES *on the Second Division.*

Aglionby, H. A.
Arbuthnot, Maj.-Gen.
Attwood, M.
Attwood, T.
Barnard, E. G.
Baring, A.
Baring, H.
Bainbridge, E. T.
Bayntun, S. A.
Beauclerk, A. W.
Bell, M.
Bellew, R. M.
Benett, J.
Bish, T.
Blackstone, W. S.
Blamire, W. E.
Blandford, Marq. of
Bolling, W.
Brocklehurst, J.
Bruce, Lord E.
Burrell, Sir C.
Cayley, E. S.
Chandos, Marq. of
Chetwynd, W. F.
Clayton, Lieut.-Col.
Cole, Viscount
Conolly, E. M.
Cookes, T. H.
Cooper, E. J.
Crawley, S.
Curteis, Capt.
Dare, R. W. H.
Dawson, E.
Denison, W. J.
Duncombe, Hon. W.
Dundas, Capt.
Dillwyn, L. W.
Etwall, R.
Fancourt, Major
Fellowes, H. A. W.
Fellowes, Hon. N.
Ferguson, G.
Finn, W. R.
Fitzsimon, C.
Fitzsimon, N.
Forester, Hon. G. C. W.
Fox, S. L.
Freemantle, Sir T.
Fryer, R.
Gaskell, J. M.
Gaskell, D.
Gore, M.
Goring, H. D.
Gillon, W. D.
Grimston, Viscount
Guise, Sir W.
Hall, B.
Handley, H.
Hanmer, Sir J.
Hay, Sir J.
Hayes, Sir E.
Henniker, Lord
Herbert, Hon. S.
Hodges, T. L.
Hoskins, K.
Hughes, H.
Hume, J.
Irton, S.
Jolliffe, H.
Kemp, J. R.
Kerrison, Sir E.
Lalor, P.
Langdale, Hon. C.
Langton, Col. Gore
Leech, John
Lennox, Lord W.
Lester, E. C.
Locke, W.
Lowther, Viscount
Lowther, Hon. Col.
Maxwell, Sir J.
Maxwell, H.
Methuen, P.
Norreys, Lord
O'Bryen, C.
O'Connell, Maurice
O'Connell, Morgan
O'Connell, John
O'Connell, Charles
Ossulston, Lord
Oswald, J.
Oswald, R. A.
Palmer, R.
Parker, Sir Hyde
Parrot, Jasper
Pease, Joseph
Perrin, Lewis
Perceval, Col. A.
Philips, Mark
Pigot, R.
Plumptre, J. P.
Potter, R.
Poulter, J. S.
Roe, J.
Ruthven, E.
Sanderson, R.
Shawe, R. N.
Stanley, E.
Stewart, J.
Stormont, Viscount
Talmash, Algernon
Tapps, G. W.
Tancred, H. W.
Tennyson, Rt. Hon. C.
Thompson, Ald.
Tooke, Wm.
Torrens, Lieut.-Col.
Trevor, Hon. G. R. B.
Tullamore, Lord
Tynte, C. J. K.
Tyrell, C.
Tyrrell, Sir John
Verner, W.
Vigors, N. A.

Wallace, R.
Walter, J.
Watkins, J. L. V.
Weyland, R.
Wilmot, Sir J. E.
Windham, W. H.
Wood, Col. T.
Wyndham, W.

TELLERS.
Ingilby, Sir W.
O'Connell, D.

HOUSE OF LORDS,
Wednesday, May 1, 1833.

MINUTES.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of the LORD CHANCELLOR, a Copy of the Fifth Report of the Commissioners for Inquiring into the Proceedings in Suits in the Superior Courts of Common Law.

Bill. Read a third time:—Public Revenue (Scotland).

Petitions presented. By the Earl of RADNOR, from St. Clement's, Oxford; and by Lord SUFFIELD, from St. George's, Middlesex,—for a Repeal of the Assessed Taxes.—By the Marquess of WESTMINSTER, and the Earls of FITZWILLIAM, MORLEY, and GOSFORD, and Lord SUFFIELD, from a great many Places,—for the Abolition of Slavery.—By Lord SUFFIELD, from a Dissenting Congregation at Nuneaton; and by the Marquess of WESTMINSTER, from Nantwich, for Relief to the Dissenters from their present difficulties.—By the Marquess of WESTMINSTER, from several Places in Wales, for a Correction of the Abuses at present existing in the Established Church in Wales, and from a Dissenting Congregation in Little Carter Lane, Doctors' Commons, for a Removal of the Civil Disabilities of the Jews; also from Over, for a Repeal or Alterations in the Sale of Beer Act.

HOUSE OF LORDS,
Thursday, May 2, 1833.

MINUTES.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of Lord TEYNHAM, an Account of the Number of Acres of Land in Great Britain cultivated in Hops, the Amount of Duty paid on Hops in the year 1832, and of the part unpaid: also the total Number of Quarters of Malt made and Duty charged thereon: and of the Number of Quarters used in Distillation, from October the 10th, 1831, to the same day, 1832.—On the Motion of the Earl of ROSSLYN, the Quantities of Wheat, Wheatmeal, and Flour, imported into Great Britain since the passing of the Act 9th George 4th, to the latest period.

Petitions presented. By Lords SUFFIELD, STANLEY, and AUCKLAND, from a great Number of Places,—against Slavery.—By Lord REDESDALE, from Kingnorth, for the Repeal of the Malt Duty.—By the Earl of ROSSLYN, from the Sheriff's Court of Fife, for Alterations in the Small Debts Court Bill.—By Lord STANLEY, from Burnley; and by Earl FITZWILLIAM, from three Places, for the Repeal or Amendment of the Sale of Beer Act.—By Lord AUCKLAND, from Shelford, for the Amendment of the Labourers Employment Bill.

ABOLITION OF SLAVERY.—PETITIONS.] The Duke of *Wellington* presented a Petition from Magistrates, Bankers, Merchants, and others, inhabitants of Belfast, for a gradual and safe Abolition of Slavery, and compensation to the Planter. He had a petition to the same effect from Edinburgh. The latter was signed by 2,468 persons, and was well entitled to attention, no less on account of the respectability of the petitioners, than by reason of the justice of the sentiments contained in the petition. He proposed that the Edinburgh petition be read at length. [The petition having been read by the Clerk, the noble Duke proceeded.] The petitioners referred to the Resolutions of the House of Commons in 1823 on the subject of Slavery and made them the basis of their statements. Those Resolutions tended to gradual emancipation, not immediate, by the adoption of temperate measures. He claimed credit for the different Governments with which he had been connected up to November, 1830, for acting on these Resolutions. The Order in Council of March, 1830, enforcing manumission, would alone have led at last to the accomplishment of the Resolution of 1823, if temperately carried into effect. It was impossible not to apprehend serious evils from immediate emancipation; the interests of the slaves themselves would be endangered no less than the security of the colonies, and the parent country would not escape the consequences that must inevitably ensue. The petitioners stated, that the revenue derived from the colonies in 1830, amounted to 7,800,000*l*., and there was every reason to believe that it was not less than 7,500,000*l*. in the last year. Was it not an object to retain such a revenue as that? According to the petition, the exports and trade connected with the colonies, amounted to 120,000,000*l*., and there were 350,000 tons of shipping employed in the colonial trade. A large income (much diminished, however, as compared with what it had been) was received by proprietors of West India estates resident in this country. This country (putting Ireland out of the question) consumed more sugar than all Europe beside. If the West-India trade were abandoned, whence could we get sugar? Only from slave colonies, which were at this moment carrying on the slave trade in the same manner as we drew our supplies of cotton from colonies where the whole population were slaves. It would seem we were going to do this to sacrifice slaves and masters, and colonies, at an expense of losing 7,000,000*l*. of revenue. Such conduct appeared to him to be little, if at all, better than insanity. He held in his hand the detail of the proceeds and expenses of an estate in the West Indies, from which it appeared, there were 161 hogsheads of sugar made upon it, which were worth 6,372*l*.; and, of this sum, 2,965*l*. went to Government for duties. After the proprietor had paid every thing connected with the transfer and sale, he had not above one-thirtieth part for himself. Great complaints were made in this country about distress; he hoped that these accounts were exaggerated; but was not that distress to be attributed, in some measure, to the insecurity in which West-India property was placed, connected with other similar circumstances. The West-India interest was unluckily at the present time exceedingly unpopular. He had done everything in his power when in office to relieve that interest, and he was convinced that till the public felt the situation of the planters, and was willing to do them justice, the country would not cease to feel the misery that must continue to be produced by the present state of the colonies.

Lord *Suffield*, after the observations made by the noble Duke, could not refrain from saying a few words. He could not but remark, that the noble Duke had taken an unusual course, in entering into arguments on the subject of the petition without having given previous notice of his intention to present it. With regard to the arguments of the petitioners, and those used by the noble Duke, nothing but his great respect for the noble Duke could induce him to answer them with gravity. The noble Duke had stated, that the petition was signed by 2,400 persons, but he begged noble Lords to remember, that he had presented a petition from the same place with a directly contrary prayer, signed by between 21,000 and 22,000 of the male adults; and if the two petitions could be considered as showing the feelings of the people of Edinburgh and its vicinity, on the subject of slavery, he thought that that feeling must be considered as decidedly in favour of abolition. As to the arguments of the petitioners, it would not be difficult to show, that they contained 100 mistakes and contradictions. Then, as to the weight due to the petition, he would only say, that there was not one petition in a thousand in favour of perpetual slavery, or, as it is called, the gradual abolition of slavery, though there was not a village in England in which it was not understood that, by gradual abolition, was meant slavery in perpetuity. The great majority of the petitions presented were in favour of its immediate extinction. He (Lord Suffield) had presented 600 or 700 petitions in favour of immediate extinction of slavery already, and he had an equal number yet to present. It was proved, by the evidence of persons lately arrived from the West Indies, that the condition of the slaves, so far from improving, was quite the reverse. The planters, fearing the loss of their power and authority, were now more given to flogging and to punishment than ever. He was convinced, that if the noble Duke had heard the evidence taken before the Committee, of the state of Slavery in the West Indies, he would have joined two noble Lords who were upon that Committee, and who were themselves shareholders and proprietors of property in the colonies. Those noble Lords had stated, that, after the evidence which they had heard, they would consent to sacrifice their property rather than that such a state of degradation and misery should continue. The noble Duke had said, that the emancipation of the slaves would be the ruin of the colonies, and the result of that would be, that they would be lost to Great Britain. He, on the contrary, thought that the only means to save the colonies was by emancipating the slaves without delay—under such restrictions as should be thought proper, and as he had no doubt his Majesty's Government would take care to provide. This was the hope of England—a hope in which it was determined not to be disappointed. Neither partial nor protracted emancipation would satisfy the people of England; and they would never consent to anything but total abolition. He, for his part, had no objection—and he believed he was speaking the opinion of all England when he said that the people had no objection—to grant compensation to the slaveholders, if any measure of relief were granted, provided the slaveholders could prove the loss they had sustained; but he was sure that none would ever agree to give a certain sum of money for each particular slave that was emancipated. Then, looking to the question in a commercial view, he was informed that the statements on which the noble Duke had founded his arguments, were utterly untrue; he had been told so by persons in the City, who had large transactions with the West Indies.

The Duke of *Wellington* said, that the noble Lord had not always manifested so much forbearance as he now found it convenient to advocate on presenting petitions. There was nothing unfair in the observations which he (the Duke of Wellington) had made; and whenever he had petitions to present, he should take that course with respect to them which his duty appeared to him to prescribe.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* was unwilling to prolong the discussion, but could not avoid saying, that the petition sailed into the harbour of their Lordships' House under something like false colours. It professed to be a petition in favour of the abolition of slavery, gradual indeed, but still in favour of abolition. However, as his noble friend observed, the petition was inconsistent—inconsistent indeed; for if its reasoning were correct, there could be no greater evil for slaves and colonies than an abolition of slavery. The petitioners asserted, that the condition of the slaves was better than that of a large proportion of his Majesty's free subjects. What was the inference? Surely not in favour of an abolition, which the petition professed to support, but in favour of a perpetuation of this happy condition of slavery. Indeed, that was the result of the arguments in the petition, and in the noble Duke's speech. His opinion was, that some immediate measure of abolition was necessary; but, in speaking of immediate abolition, he did not mean, and he was sure the petitioners did not mean, that a measure should be sent out to the colonies directly, and that it should be instantly acted on in the way of emancipation. What he contemplated was, that some measure should be immediately carried into effect for substituting a new set of relations between man and man, for the subtraction of the slave from that power in reference to which there existed no appeal, and for the substitution of a system of law and justice for one of irresponsible power.

Petition laid on the Table.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, May 2, 1833.

MINUTES.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of Mr. GUEST, an Account of the Glass-houses employed in the Manufacture of Broad, Crown, Flint, and Plate, and Common Bottle Glass, in each year, from 1826 to 1832, inclusive: of the Amount of Duty respectively charged on Flint and Plate, Broad, Crown, and Bottle Glass, from 1826, to 1832, with the Amount returned by way of Drawback.—On the Motion of Mr. WARRE, an Account of the Assessment for the Inhabited House Duty, at which a hundred of the highest rated Houses in London are Assessed, for the year ending 5th April, 1833: of the Assessment for the Inhabited House Duty, at which a hundred of the highest rated Houses in the Country are Assessed, distinguishing the Counties, for the year ending 5th April, 1833: of any Instruction given by the Tax-office to the District Surveyors in the County of Kent, since 1st January, 1831, respecting a fresh Assessment of Houses in that County, for the Inhabited House Duty; and also a Copy of any Report, or Return, made by the Surveyors pursuant to such Instruction.—On the Motion of Mr. RICARDO, an Account of the Number of Officers and Servants employed, and the Emoluments and Salaries received by each in the different County Gaols and Houses of Correction in England and Wales.—On the Motion of Sir JOHN RAE READ, an Account of the Imports and Exports of British and Foreign Wool, Woollen Yarn, and Woollen Manufacture, for 1832.—On the Motion of Mr. GEORGE LAMB, a Copy of the Fifth Report of the Commissioners for Inquiring into the Practice and Proceedings of the Courts of Common Law.—On the Motion of Mr. EWART, an Account of the Number of Irish Poor Shipped under Passes from the Port of Liverpool, and the Expense incurred thereby.—On the Motion of Mr. SPRING RICE, an Account of the Sums paid into the Stamp Office for Duty on the Insurance from Fire, for the three last Quarters of the year 1832.

Petitions presented. By Mr. EWING, from Glasgow, for the Abolition of the Stamp Duty on Receipts; and from the same Place, for an Alteration in the Royal Burgh (Scotland) Bill; and from the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons (Glasgow), for an Alteration in the Apothecaries Act; and from the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, for Employing Ministers and Schoolmasters in Ireland acquainted with the Irish as well as the English Language; also from the Hand-loom Weavers of Glasgow, for Local Boards of Trade, and for Relief.—By Mr. RICHARDS, from Dublin, for Poor Laws for Ireland.—By the Sheriffs of London, from the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council of the City of London, for the Abolition of Slavery.—By Mr. CHARLES ROSS, from the Protestant Dissenters of Northallerton, for a Better System of Parochial Registration, and for a Removal of the Grievances connected with the present System affecting Dissenters.

COMMUTATION OF TAXES.] Colonel *Torrens*, in pursuance of his notice, rose to move for the repeal of those taxes which lower the profits of capital and the wages of labour. He was aware, that the question of a Property-tax had, for the present, already been decided by the House, and that hon. Members were wearied out by the protracted debate which had recently taken place upon this subject. Nevertheless, as the question of a Property-tax had, as it appeared to him, been so much misunderstood, he would intreat the indulgence of the House while he endeavoured, as briefly as possible, to explain the manner of its operation, and to obviate the objections which had been brought forward against it. All the wealth of the country might be divided into distinct and different portions, namely, fixed property and floating capital; fixed property consisting of land, houses, funds, and money upon mortgage; and floating capital being the stock employed in cultivation, in manufactures, in trade, and commerce. Now it would appear, on a careful examination of the subject, that the revenue derived from floating capital was regulated by causes altogether different from those which regulated the revenue derived from fixed capital. In every country there was a customary rate of profit, without obtaining which, capitalists would not engage and would not remain in business. It was this customary rate of profit, always tending to equality for every species of floating capital, which determined the income of floating capital. Assuming, for the sake of illustration, that this rate of profit was ten per cent., then the income of a farmer employing 2,000*l.* of floating capital, would be 200*l.* per annum. But what determined the income of the proprietor of the farmer? It was clear that the proprietor could obtain as his income on rent, only that portion of the surplus produce which might remain after the farmer had obtained his ten per cent. upon his capital of 2,000*l.*; and, supposing the whole surplus produce to be worth 400*l.*, the rent would be 200*l.* The principles which regulated the respective incomes of the farmer and of the proprietor were these: the customary rate of profit determined, in the first instance, what the former should receive, and then the rent of the proprietor was determined by the degree in which the value of the surplus produce exceeded what was the customary profit upon the cultivator's profit. The same principle held good with respect to houses. The building rent was regulated by the profits upon the cost of erecting the house; the ground rent was determined by the advantages of situation, giving to the occupier benefits exceeding the customary profits upon his capital. Now, if hon. Members would consider the difference between the revenue derived from floating capital and the revenue obtained from fixed property, they would immediately perceive that all the objections which had been urged against a tax upon fixed property fell to the ground, and were altogether inapplicable. In the first place, it had been urged that it would be unequal and unjust to tax fixed property, and to leave other descriptions of property free from impost. Now, how did this objection apply to the landed proprietor? Suppose, for illustration, that the customary rate of profit was ten per cent., and that a farmer employing 2,000*l.* in cultivation raises a surplus produce which, after all his outlay was paid, left him 400*l.* As 200*l.* will yield him the customary profit upon his capital, the other 200*l.* will be rent, and will be paid to the proprietor. But lay a tax upon the farmer's income of 100*l.*. and that which will remain after yielding the customary profit will be only 100*l.* On the expiration of the contract between the landlord and tenant, the rent will therefore be reduced from 200*l.* to 100*l.*; because, were the tenant required to pay more than this, he could not obtain the customary rate of profit upon his capital, and would withdraw to some other pursuit. It was quite clear, therefore, that as far as the land was concerned, taxes upon the farmer's profit fall ultimately upon the proprietor, and that therefore there could be nothing unjust or unfair, or in any way injurious to the proprietors of fixed property, in taxing it, without taxing floating capital in the same proportion. But this was understating the case. He (Colonel Torrens) was prepared to show, and he hoped to demonstrate, that taxes upon revenue arising from floating capital, employed in productive industry, were injurious to the proprietors of fixed property, and that the rents of landed proprietors would be actually increased by a commutation of taxes, which would relieve productive industry by laying a direct impost upon the revenue derived from fixed property. He believed that, with the indulgence of the House, he might be able to demonstrate this by a brief and simple illustration:—Suppose a farmer, with 2,000*l.* cultivating land which yields him over and above his outlay 250*l.*; in this case the rent will be 50*l.* Now, lay a tax of fifty per cent. upon the farmer's income of 200*l.* and the land must be abandoned and no rent whatever paid; for the farmer being entitled to ten per cent upon his capital of 2,000*l.*, will obtain, after the tax, only 150*l.*, and will betake himself, on the expiration of his contract, to some other pursuit. Thus taxes upon the income derived from agricultural capital prevent the cultivation of a belt of land which might otherwise be profitably tilled; and, as a necessary consequence, keep down the rent upon all the better below the point which it otherwise would attain. Not only are the industrious classes deprived of employment, but the proprietors of the soil are more injured, by a tax upon floating capital, than they could be by an equal per centage levied upon fixed property. It had been urged, as an objection to a tax upon fixed property, that it would drive capital abroad—that all would seek to escape the tax by selling out of the Funds, or by disposing of their estates and making investments in Foreign Securities. This objection was quite futile. The alarm which induced the proprietors of fixed property to sell would operate upon those who were able to purchase, and the price of all fixed property would immediately fall in proportion to the tax, so that no inducement could remain for foreign investment. But it had been supposed that the motive to accumulating and saving would be diminished. No such thing. If the price of real and fixed property fell in proportion to the tax, as it certainly would, investments in fixed property would be just as beneficial, would yield just the same per centage as before, and no conceivable diminution in the motive to saving could occur. There was only one objection to a tax upon fixed property which deserved serious notice, and that was, that it might operate as a discouragement to permanent improvements. But this objection was easily obviated. Let notice be given of all permanent improvements required, and let no increased rate be imposed in consequence of them for a period of ten or twenty years, so as to free the capitalist who effected them from discouragement. He begged pardon of the House for having detained them so long upon a subject dry and uninviting. But it did appear to him, that a crisis had arrived which had rendered it necessary to reverse the whole system of our financial policy, in order to relieve the industry of the country, and that it was, therefore, most important the real incidence and effect of a tax upon fixed property should be placed distinctly before the House and the country. He felt it to be his duty to endeavour, however imperfectly, to perform this task. He would not, as the sense of the House had been so recently taken upon the question of a Property-tax, press his Motion to a division, but would rest satisfied with having enunciated principles, which, as he believed it would, at no distant period, become imperative upon the Legislature to adopt.

Mr. *Maxwell* seconded the Motion. The taxes on capital employed in industry amounted to twenty-five per cent.; which, as the gallant Colonel had observed, was in a great measure the cause why the distress of the country was so great. It was impossible to take away from the profits of those who employed labourers, without compelling them to lower the rate of wages of the labourer. If the House duly considered the poverty and misery which at present existed, they would try to place the burthens of the country in such a position as not to drive the people to despair. Since the year 1819 the wages of the manufacturing labourer had been reduced one-half; and it was their only consolation that the wages of the agricultural labourer had fallen as much. But what was the case with those who lived on the taxes? That the fundholder received eighty-seven sovereigns for that for which he had given only forty. Those two causes had produced the existing state of things. He was persuaded that if we adhered to the present standard of value, it would be impossible long to carry on the financial affairs of the country; and general misery would go on increasing until it resulted in anarchy. He wished to support public credit; but if every kind of artificial means possible were resorted to for that purpose, we should take from the country more than its resources would allow, and should be utterly unable to go on. If the gallant Colonel pressed the Motion to a division, he would divide with him.

Mr. *Cobbett* said, that he was not so fortunate as to understand the gallant Colonel's arguments, but he was more fortunate as to his Motion; and if the gallant officer would stop with the proposition for repealing the taxes paid out of the wages of labour, he (Mr. Cobbett) was quite ready to agree with him; but if he pressed the whole of his Motion to a division, he must certainly oppose it.

Lord *Althorp* could not consent to the Motion of the gallant Colonel. The question was a purely scientific one; and he did not see how the gallant Colonel had made out by argument the proposition which he had submitted to the House. The gallant Colonel was entirely mistaken, if he supposed that any peculiar injury was sustained by raising a part of the taxes from the capital of employers. He would not, however, go into the question at present; but would content himself with negativing the Motion.

Motion negatived without a division.

POOR LAWS (IRELAND).] Mr. *Richards* spoke to the following effect.*

Mr. Speaker: I rise to address the House under feelings of considerable embarrassment.

Surrounded, as I am, by so many hon. Gentlemen of great experience and eminent talents, I cannot but regret that some one, better qualified than I am adequately to perform the task which I have undertaken, does not bring forward the motion which I shall have the honour of submitting to the House.

There are some hon. Gentlemen, I know, who think that the King's Ministers would be the most proper persons to bring forward the question of making some provision for the poor in Ireland. But, I hope, I shall not be accused of presumption in attempting to do this, when I state that, nearly two months ago, I applied to the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to know if his Majesty's Government had any intention of introducing some measure for the relief of the poor in Ireland; and was answered, "that the Government had no such intention." Impressed with a deep sense of the magnitude and importance of the question to the best interests of the United Kingdom, and relying on the kindness and indulgence of the House, I then determined not to shrink from the discharge of what I consider to be a public duty.

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* Printed from the corrected edition published by Baldwin and Cradock.

Before I enter on the consideration of the expediency, and, as it appears to me, necessity, of making some provision for the poor in Ireland, the House will, perhaps, allow me to ask, if there be any difference of opinion amongst hon. gentlemen as to the state of Ireland? The hon. and learned member for Dublin says, [*hear, hear.*] But, alas! that Ireland is, but too frequently, the scene of outrage and violence, and bloodshed, none will deny. During the debate on the Irish Disturbances Bill, the then right hon. Secretary for Ireland, and many other hon. Gentlemen, described, in strong language, the atrocities and crimes which had been committed in Ireland. They said, that robbery, and violence, and murder, were perpetrated on a system; that property and life were not secure; that the ordinary laws would no longer suffice; and that, in order to punish and repress crime, the Government must be armed with powers of a novel and extraordinary character. Little, however, was said of the want of employment in Ireland; and, still less, of the poverty and misery that prevail there. In order to give some idea of this want of employment, and poverty, and misery, I will, with the permission of the House, read a passage from the 'Summary Report,' published, in 1830, by the Select Committee appointed to inquire into and report on the state of the poor in Ireland.

"Your Committee regret to be obliged to state, that a very considerable proportion of the population is considered to be out of employment. The number is estimated differently, and by Mr. Smith is supposed to be as much as one-fifth of the entire population. By Mr. Ensor it is carried still further, and is calculated to amount to one-fourth. From this want of demand for labour necessarily ensues very severe distress among the labouring classes. This, combined with the consequences of an altered system of managing land, is stated to produce misery and suffering which no language can possibly describe, and which it is necessary to witness in order fully to estimate. The distress is stated to exist in its greatest severity in the suburbs of cities and towns. Dr. Doyle describes the condition of this suffering class in the strongest and most impressive manner. He states a case of some of the ejected tenantry, who, seeking a refuge in the towns, after their little capital is expended, become dependent upon charity. They next give up their house, and are obliged to take, not a room, but what they call a corner. Four of these wretched families are sometimes accommodated in one small apartment of a cabin, and three in another. I have not myself seen so many as seven families in one of these cabins, but I have been assured by one of the officiating clergymen, that there are many instances of it. Their beds are merely a little straw spread at night on the floor, and by day wrapped up or covered with a quilt or with a blanket. In these abodes of misery, disease is often produced by extreme want; disease wastes the people, for they have no food or comforts to restore them; they die in a little time."

In proposing, as a remedy for this want of employment and consequent misery in Ireland, the introduction of Poor-laws, it is impossible not to advert to what has been done, by way of provision for the poor, in England. The alleged effects of Poor-laws in England will, I expect, be urged by some hon. Gentlemen, as an argument against their introduction into Ireland. I quite agree, indeed, with those who consider the whole question as much an English as an Irish question. And, with this impression on my mind, and in order to save the time of the House, I shall confine myself to four heads of observation; and shall address the House on each with as much brevity as I can.

The first head of the important subject, which I proceed to bring under the attention of the House, is the great injury sustained by England from the dreadful extent of pauperism in Ireland.

It must be obvious to the House, that the melancholy extent of pauperism in Ireland, by keeping that country in a constant state of trouble, and serving to excite the poor population to breaches of the law, to violence and disorder, has long been a main cause, and, while it continues, must still be a cause, of rendering Ireland a drain upon the resources of England; and has prevented Ireland from contributing (in the degree she otherwise might) to the wealth, the prosperity, and strength of the United Kingdom.

In addition to this great evil, which, in various ways, has long been severely felt, we have to consider the injuries which England suffers from the vast numbers of labouring Irish, who have (especially of late years, since the easy and cheap communication by steam navigation) continually flowed into this country. They have been the means of progressively deteriorating the condition of the industrious and laborious classes in England; and of spreading pauperism and distress amongst us to an extent that has at length become appalling!

In the third Report, in 1826, of the Select Committee on Emigration, this effect seems to have been foreseen. In that Report, it is said, "Mr. Malthus was asked whether he had taken into consideration what may be the effect of the continued increase of the population of Ireland upon the condition of the labouring classes of England? He stated, that, in his opinion, the effect will be most fatal to the happiness of the labouring classes in England; because there will be a constant and increasing emigration from Ireland to England, which will tend to lower the wages of labour in England; and to prevent the good effects arising from the superior prudence of the labouring classes in this country. He stated, that he has understood, that, in the western parts of England and Scotland, in the manufacturing districts, particularly in Manchester and Glasgow, the wages of labour have been lowered essentially by the coming over of Irish labourers; which opinion, your Committee beg to observe, is confirmed by the evidence that has been given by witnesses resident in those districts. Mr. Malthus is of opinion, that this emigration will tend materially to alter the habits of the labouring class in England—to force them into the habitual consumption of a sort of food inferior to that to which they are now accustomed, namely, potatoes; and the danger of the use of the lowest quality of food is, that it leaves no resource in a period of scarcity; whereas, in the case of a population habitually living on wheat, there is always the resource of potatoes to compensate for the failure of an average crop. He is also of opinion, that it will necessarily throw a great number of English labourers upon the Poor-rates; inasmuch as, if there be a redundancy of labour in any English parish, the presence of Irish labourers, universally seeking for employment, would prevent such English labour from being absorbed. He stated, that he was satisfied no permanent improvement would take place in the case of the English poor, even if a portion of them were removed by emigration, as long as this influx of Irish labourers continued without a check."

But even the extract which I have read will fail to give the House an adequate notion how much of the pauperism and distress in England is occasioned by the enormous and overwhelming influx of Irish poor. In some parishes within the precincts of the metropolis, the amount given for the relief of the pauper Irish, who have come over to England flying from beggary and want in their own country, in search of employment and subsistence here, almost exceeds belief. I hold in my hand a paper from the parish of St. Olave, Southwark, signed by the overseers, giving an account of the number of persons, under the head of "Casual Poor," relieved in that parish last Thursday. From this paper, it appears that there were relieved 336 adult persons. Of these—274 were Irish; 56 English; 5 Welch; 1 West Indian—total 336.

But these 274 Irish adults had 284 children; so that the number of Irish persons relieved was, in fact, 558! Some hon. Gentlemen may ask, why the parish officers do not pass these Irish paupers to their own country? But, when I state, that, owing to Roman Catholic marriages in England not being legal, the children, in the case I have mentioned, would, if their parents were sent to Ireland, remain a charge on the parish, hon. Gentlemen will readily believe, what the overseers allege, that they find it cheaper to give the parents some relief here, than to send away the parents and wholly maintain the children In the parish of St. George, Southwark, there are now, I am told, 100 illegitimate Irish children who have been thrown on the parish from the passing of their parents to Ireland. But this is not the whole case of these parishes: for the labour there is almost entirely engrossed by the Irish labourers from the English. What is to be the result of the progress of such a state of things, if some remedy be not applied? The Poor-rates have, hitherto, prevented the labouring class in England from being reduced to the Irish starvation level. But those Poor-rates have already ruined great numbers of the industrious middle class of England—that class which used to be considered the pride and strength of the country; and yet the demand is increasing for an augmentation of those rates, in order to meet the growing misery of the English poor and the multiplying calls of hordes of Irish poor, who continue to pour, like a flood, into this country to swell her poor lists, and throw the poor English out of employment. And, shall England, in spite of her improved modes of cultivation in agriculture, which improved modes furnish increased employment—in spite of her manufactures, carried on with a skill and to an extent which the world never before saw—in spite of her commerce, which spreads to every part of the habitable globe — in spite of all which ingenuity can devise, or which unrivalled industry and enterprise can accomplish, shall England be thus impoverished, degraded, and, finally, destroyed?—I cannot, I will not believe it. In the name of the industrious and laborious people of England, I appeal to this House for succour; and I confidently trust to their justice, and rely upon their wisdom.

Let me, now, entreat the attention of the House to the melancholy state in which the poor population of England was, and the causes of that state, before the establishment of Poor-laws.

To show the state of the poor population of England, which led to the enactment of Poor-laws, I will, with the permission of the House, read a passage from *Strype's Annals*, vol. 4. p. 290.

This passage is contained in a paper, preserved by Strype, and written by an eminent justice of the peace for the county of Somerset, in the year 1596; and contains an account of the disorders which then prevailed in the county of Somerset. The author says, 'That forty persons had been 'there executed in a year, for robberies, 'thefts, and other felonies; thirty-five 'burned in the hand, thirty-seven whipped, '183 discharged. That those who were 'discharged were most wicked and desperate 'persons, who never could come to any 'good, because they would not work, and 'none would take them into service. That, 'notwithstanding this great number of 'indictments, the fifth part of the felonies 'committed in the county were not brought 'to a trial: the greater number escaped 'censure, either from the superior cunning 'of the felons, the remissness of the Magis'trates, or the foolish lenity of the people. 'That the rapines committed by the infinite 'number of wicked, wandering, idle people, 'were intolerable to the poor countrymen; 'and obliged them to a perpetual watch 'over their sheepfolds, their pastures, their 'woods, and their corn-fields. That the 'other counties of England were in no 'better condition than Somersetshire, and 'many of them were even in a worse. 'That there were, at least, 300 or 400 able'bodied vagabonds in every county, who 'lived by theft and rapine; and who 'sometimes met in troops to the number of 'sixty, and committed spoil on the in'habitants. That if all the felons of this 'kind were assembled, they would be able, 'if reduced to good subjection, to give the 'greatest enemy her Majesty has a strong 'battle. And that the Magistrates them'selves were intimidated from executing 'the laws upon them; and there were 'examples of Justices of Peace, who, after 'giving sentence against rogues, had in'terposed to stop the execution of their own 'sentence, on account of the danger which 'hung over them from the confederates of 'these felons.'

But, Sir, what were the main causes which led to this dreadful spread of pauperism and disorder in England? I earnestly request the attention of the House to these causes, more especially for this reason, that the very same causes operated to produce similar effects in Ireland, where their baneful influence has ever since continued; for, although the evil has been met in England, it never has been met in Ireland. The main causes of the spread of pauperism in England, at the period when Poor-laws were adopted, were these two: —First, the progressive and widely extended impoverishment of parishes, by the alienation of the whole, or far greater part, of their endowments; and the appropriation (as the phrase was) of those endowments to monasteries, to Bishops, to Cathedral Chapters, and Church dignitaries; and, secondly and chiefly, to the plunder of the monasteries by Henry 8th. It appears, from various authorities, and, abundantly, from a distinguished antiquarian and historian of England, Bishop Kennett, in his History of Appropriations, not that a precisely equal *tripartite* or *quatuor-partite* division of tithes, or other Church property, existed in this country; but that, when the incumbents held the entire endowments of their respective parishes, they were, uniformly, considered as burthened with the care of the churches, and with the relief of the poor. The parochial clergy, by various means and under various pretences, were deprived of their endowments by the monasteries, the Bishops, and the Cathedral Chapters. But there was always an understanding, that, out of the parochial endowments thus appropriated, relief for the poor should be provided. The duties of hospitality towards poor strangers, *prô misericordia Dei,* and of charitable sustentation of the poor, were prominently put forward by the monasteries, the Bishops, and the Cathedral Chapters, amongst the objects for which they sought and received the parochial endowments transferred to them. The Bishops and Cathedral Chapters soon lost sight of the poor. And the property of the monasteries was given to Henry 8th, by the two statutes* for their dissolution, which he procured to be passed. These two statutes gave him this property, to be held by him "only in as large a manner as it had been held by the governors of the monasteries;" and with an express saving of all the rights and interests of all other persons and bodies, which those persons and bodies had in the said property. But, under these Acts, Henry seized the whole property; and gave it away or sold it, without any consideration for the equitable claims and reserved interests of the poor; in plain terms, the poor were robbed. Documents are quoted, both by Bishop Kennett and by the famous Selden, confirmatory of the statement I have made; which documents are highly curious, instructive, and interesting;† but which I shall not venture to trespass on the time of the House by reading.

But, Sir, why have I referred to these high authorities, and to the extensive and

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*27 Hen. 8. cap. 28; and 31. Hen. 8. cap. 13.

† Bishop Kennett says, "Another fair pretext of the religious (the Monks) to gain appropriations, was to desire no more than two parts of the tithe and profits to be so appropriated to them; leaving a third to the free and quiet enjoyment of the parish priest, whom, at the same time, they eased from the burthen of repairing the church and relieving the poor; and took that charge upon themselves."

"Had the religious kept to this double portion; and discharged the works of piety and charity, for which purpose they received it; this had been specious in the eye of the world; and even tolerable to the parish priest, from whom nothing was then expected beside the bare support of himself: but the religious could not be contented with their parts without engrossing the whole; which they did, by all the ways of acquisition. So that, in two or three following ages, parochial churches would have been universally annexed and united to religious houses, if the bishops had not provided for the ordination of perpetual vicarages, and the distinct endowment of them. This institution of vicarages, though designed by the bishops to remedy the mischiefs of appropriations, was turned by the Monks into a new method of facilitating their design. For the bishops now requiring the presentation of a perpetual vicar, and endowing him with a separate portion of manse, glebe, tithe, and oblations (at least to the old proportion of one part in three), assigned the customary burthens of church-repair and poor to the religious. This appeared with some face of equity, and took off the odium of appropriating parochial to conventual churches; because it did not alienate or much divert the Ecclesiastical Revenues, but only prescribed and allotted them to religious men, and to sacred uses, as devoted from the beginning.

"When the scandal of appropriating was thus abated, the religious never wanted pretensions to get more and more churches to their own proper uses. And because hospitality and charity were the more especial charge entailed upon the two parts of tithe and oblations or offerings, they chiefly urged these occasions, and promised to employ the profits this way.

"The Seculars learned this way of gain from the Monks. They likewise got the churches of their own donation to be converted to their own proper uses; to increase the number of their prebends, augment the portion of the dean, or of any other principal dignitary; or for the table of the bishop; or, indeed, for any thing that could contribute to the grandeur of the cathedral church or see.

"The secular clergy were sensible of the yoke; and took many occasions to seek for ease and redemption from it: sometimes by appeals to Rome; but all to little purpose, while the religious were too rich, and therefore too strong for them. The answer which the clergy of Berkshire made to the pope's legate, *anno* 1240, was their common argument against appropriations, as well as against papal exactions, viz. that by authority of the Holy Fathers, the fruits of parochial benefices were assigned to certain uses of the church, of the ministers, and of the poor; and ought not to be converted to any other uses.

"The like arguments were again offered by the clergy in convocation, 1246: that it had been a good old custom in the kingdom of England for the rectors of parish churches to live in hospitality and charity; whereas a subscandalous robbery of the poor, at the period of the dissolution of the Monasteries? Far be it from me to seek to disturb property, or to root up the foundations of long settled possessions. I have stated the truths which I have advanced only for the purpose of showing the causes which produced the establishment of Poor-laws in England.

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ducting their former profits had put them under the necessity of closeness and narrowness of living. And (about A. D. 1414) the University of Oxford, being required by king Henry the Fifth, at the beginning of his reign, to lay before him such matters as might deserve to be considered and reformed in an ecclesiastical synod; among the articles of grievance, speaks thus pathetically of the appropriations of churches:—'The manifold appropriation of churches has been obtained (by divers subtle and sinister suggestions), especially to bishops' tables, and also to monasteries before sufficiently endowed; by which means there does arise a great discomfort to the parishioners, and the hospitable refreshment to the poor is withdrawn, &c. And where vicars are instituted, so small a portion is assigned to them, that they cannot conveniently support themselves, nor relieve their poor parishioners, as they are bound to do.'

"The bishops of the Church of England were likewise sensible, and very much ashamed, of this scandalous practice (viz. of appropriations). They had, indeed, been too much the authors and abettors of it. Some of them had been regular Monks: and the religious could make it the bishop's interest; they could allow him a standing pension out of their larger portion of the tithes—they could let him appropriate one church to his own table, on condition of appropriating another to their convent. (Bishop Kennett here refers to Wartoni Angl. Sacr. p. 350.)

"But, amidst all the acts of extorting a compliance, the English bishops were, by degrees, much offended with this sacrilegious humour of the Monks." (A sacrilegious humour which the bishops, and cathedral chapters, had been long most earnestly indulging in and imitating, according even to Bishop Kennett's own statements and proofs). "And at last the bishops were so conscious of the iniquity and scandal of this practice, that they dared no longer consent to it without an apology, and open confession of their doing an ill thing."

"One of the very best governors of the Church before the Reformation, John Peckham, constituted Archbishop of Canterbury in 1278, in an epistle to the bishop elect of Hereford, reflects severely on the prior of Wenlock and his brother, for their collusion in appropriating churches; and thence takes occasion to say, that, by thus grasping at rectories and tithes they very much hurt the Commonwealth; they did in a manner extinguish the care of souls; they locked up the gates of hospitality; they murdered the poor by not feeding them; they fatted up the rich to nauseousness itself, &c. &c. All which mischiefs, and many more not fit to be mentioned, do for the most part follow the appropriation of churches." Bishop Kennett, afterwards referring to "the great increase of the poor," early in the reign of Elizabeth, says, "Another ill consequence of despoiling the parish churches was the increase of the poor; which was not altogether owing to the dissolution of the abbeys, but, in some measure, to the decay of the parochial clergy;" (viz. through appropriations, &c.) "who, being now burthened with greater families, and yet supported with less income, could neither employ nor relieve so many of their poor neighbours as they were wont to do; and the Lay Impropriators, though they received the tithes with the rent-charge of hospitality and charity upon them, spent little or nothing in those pious uses."

A very remarkable document is quoted by Bishop Kennett, and also by Selden, from the *Monasticon Anglicanum*, which throws much light on the subject. It is a complaint preferred to Parliament, not long after the dissolution of monasteries, by a London merchant. "Ye that be Lords and Burgesses of the Parliament House, I require of you, in the name of my poor brethren, that are Englishmen, and members of Christ's body, that ye consider well (as ye will answer before the face of Almighty God, in the day of judgment) this abuse, and see it amended . . . . If the parsonages were impropred," (viz. appropriated to monasteries), "the Monks were bound to deal alms to the poor, and to keep hospitality. But now that all the abbeys, with their goods, and lands, and impropred parsonages, be in temporal men's hands, I do not hear tell that one halfpennyworth of alms, or any other profit, cometh unto the people of those parishes. Your pretence of pulling down abbeys was to amend that which was amiss. It was far amiss, that a great part of the lands of the abbeys (which were given to bring up learned men that might be preachers, to keep hospitality, and give alms to the poor), should be spent upon a few superstitious monks, which gave not forty pounds in alms when they should have given two hundred. It was amiss, that Monks should have parsonages in their hands, and deal but the twentieth part thereof to the poor. . . . . The Monks gave too little alms. . . . . . . But now, where twenty pounds were given yearly to the poor, in more than a hundred places in England is not one meal's meat given. . . . . . And as touching the alms that they (the monks) dealt, and the hospitality they kept, every man knoweth that many thousands were well received of them, and might have been better, if they had not had so many great men's horse to feed, and had they not been overcharged

This robbery of the poor, on the dissolution of the Monasteries, caused the greatest pauperism and misery. Mendicancy and vagrancy covered the land as with a leprosy. Robbery and murder were of frequent occurrence. To punish and repress outrage and crime, measures of the utmost rigour were had recourse to. Upwards of forty Acts of Parliament were successively passed without effect. In vain were tried transportations, and hangings, and emigration, and Martial-law—all would not do. At length was enacted the 43rd of Elizabeth; and this famous Act, which was drawn up by Bacon, assisted by the other eminent statesmen of that day; and which was, deliberately and advisedly, made the law of England, soon cured the numerous evils which then afflicted the land. Dalton describes their effect thus. He says, "1st. Idleness is very much repressed. 2nd, Infinite swarms of vagabonds are rooted out, which before wandered up and down, to the great danger and indignity of our nation. 3rd. We ourselves are now compelled but to relieve the poor of our own parishes (whose condition and estate we know), and to a certainty of gift, wherewith we are now taxed by our neighbours; whereas, before, we gave we knew not what nor to whom, and many times to such as were ready to cut our throats, if opportunity had served."

Permit me now, in the third place, to call the attention of the House to Ireland.

The Bishops, the Deans and Chapters, and the Monasteries there also,* under one pretext or other, sacrilegiously appropriated to themselves, to a very pernicious extent, the property of the Parochial Incumbents. Still, in Ireland, the poor, till the dissolution of the Monasteries, received much alms from them; but when the Monasteries in that country were dissolved, this great resource of the poor was cut off. Their condition was aggravated by absenteeism, and the perishable nature of their food; added to this, the potato crop is liable to failure, and, when it fails, famine and fever ensue. Accordingly, we find that Ireland has long been, and is now, in a state very similar to the state in which England was in the reign of Elizabeth. Outrages, rapine, murders, abound. Life and property are alike insecure. The people, suffering from want and misery, lend a ready ear to any agitator who holds out to them a prospect of relief. Circumstances like those I have mentioned generate agitators. They address themselves to the wants and wishes, or supposed wants and

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with such idle gentlemen as were never out of the abbeys."—See Kennett's History of Appropriations, pp. 129, 130; and Selden, in his History of Tithes, p. 487.

Selden, referring to the plunder of the poor, &c. at the dissolution of monasteries, says, "I doubt not but that every good man wishes that, at our dissolution of monasteries, both the lands and impropriated tithes and churches possessed by them (that is, things sacred to the service of God, although abused by such as had them) had been bestowed, rather for the advancement of the church to a better maintenance of the labouring and deserving ministry, to the fostering of good arts, relief of the poor, and other such good uses, as might retain in them, for the benefit of the church or commonwealth, a character of the wishes of those who first with devotion dedicated them (as in some countries, upon the Reformation, was religiously done), than conferred with such a prodigal dispensation as it happened, on those who stood ready to devour what was sanctified."—Selden's History of Tithes, p. 486.

Selden, writing of the period from A.D. 800 to 1200, says, "*Res Dominicæ*, and *Dominica Substantia*, and *Dei Census*, and the like, are the attributes given to tithes by the ancients of this age; which also they style *Patrimonia Pauperum*, and *Tributa egentium animarum*, and *Stipendia Pauperum, hospitum, et peregrinorum;* whence also the clergy were not to use them *quasi suis, sed quasi commendatis*." (Selden refers to Councils' authority, and Pope Alexander the Third; and says, that the council of *Lateran*, under Innocent the Third, agrees to this).

* In a publication of considerable learning, written by —— Ryves, Judge of the Prerogative Court in Ireland, and dedicated to King James the First, a publication which produced very important results, this eminent author thus wrote:—"But of all kingdoms of the Christian world, I suppose that never any was so surcharged, and ruined with this heavy burthen" (of appropriations) "as this poor kingdom of Ireland hath been and is. . . . For the more superstitious, the more easy to be wrought upon in this kind To instance in one for all—I have observed, out of an old ledger-book in the abbey of St. Thomas, near Dublin (a house of no very old foundation), that, in a few years after it was erected, it had procured fifty-nine church livings, in part or in whole, to be appropriated to their uses. Neither may we doubt but that Kilmainham, St. Mary's, and other such houses, which were in great number in and about Dublin; and other parts of that kingdom, had their share alike," &c.—Ryves's Poor Vicar's Plea, p. 9.

wishes of the people. "Per omnia tempora, quicumque rempublicam agitavêre, honestis nominibus, sicuti jura populi defenderent;" and thus the safety of the State itself is endangered. Is it not then monstrous, that no adequate legislative remedy has been ever applied, in Ireland, to such dreadful evils?—that all the remedy should be left to the voluntary benevolence, the discretionary charity, and the kind consideration of the Irish landlords of all descriptions? Let me not be misunderstood. I do not believe that English landlords, under similar circumstances, would be a jot better than Irish. I know some Irish landlords in this House, and others elsewhere, who are men of enlightened understanding, enlarged and active benevolence, and true patriotism. But, Sir, not the sufferings of Ireland only, but the sufferings and dangers of England, imperiously require the Legislature to interfere; and, without further delay, to apply the proper and adequate remedy. And to this last head of the great subject I am endeavouring to bring before the House, I now respectfully and earnestly solicit their attention.

If history be truly said to be philosophy teaching by example, then we ought not to disregard the lesson taught us by the history of the establishment of Poor-laws in England, and their non-establishment in Ireland. The domestic circumstances of the two countries in 1601, when the 43rd of Elizabeth was passed, were, in many respects, alike. Are they alike now? It is sometimes painful to make comparisons; but the House cannot but look on this picture and look on that. Here, we see peace and order, and obedience to the laws; there, outrage and disorder, and disobedience. Why is there this difference between the two countries? I answer, because the poor, in Ireland, have not had justice done them. Give Ireland Poor-laws; and, to use the words of Dr. Doyle, "You will gladden the heart of the widow, be a staff to the aged, and a resting-place to him who has no home; you will shelter the houseless, clothe the naked, feed the hungry, comfort the afflicted, and relieve the distressed. Give Ireland Poor-laws, and you will put an end to vagrancy, separate the impostor from the virtuous, compel the idler to do his work, and remove from the turbulent the food of sedition."

Sir, it is impossible, I think, for any one carefully to read, as I have done, the elaborate Reports of the Committee of 1830, appointed to examine into and report on the state of the Irish poor, and the Extracts from the evidence collected by the Poor-law Commissioners, without being struck by the manifest appearance there is of an endeavour to make out a case against Poor-laws. In saying this, I mean no disrespect either to the eminent individuals who composed the Committee of 1830, or towards the Poor-law Commissioners. And, especially, I beg to assure the right hon. Gentleman who was Chairman of that Committee, that for him I entertain the greatest respect. Having thus guarded myself, I hope, from any suspicion of intending the slightest disrespect towards any one connected with those documents, I shall speak of the documents themselves without reserve.

In reading the extracts, I could not help noticing the twist, to borrow a phrase, if he will allow me, of the hon. member for Oldham, which the reporters seemed to have against Poor-laws. None of the advantages—none of the benefits—which result from Poor-laws, are mentioned, or even alluded to! No; the abuses only are pointed out and dwelt on, Now, I do not contend for the continuance of these abuses in England; and, still less, would I seek to introduce them into Ireland; but because abuses have crept into the Administration of the Poor-laws in England, is that an argument of any force against Poor-laws? What! because abuses in the Administration of the Civil and Criminal Law are complained of, shall we, therefore, destroy our Courts of Justice? Because our army and navy occasion us great expense, shall we dismantle the one and disband the other; and thus deprive ourselves of safety at home and of defence abroad? In all human institutions there will be abuses and defects; and it is well to correct and amend them. But he would hardly be accounted a wise statesman, who, on account of alleged abuses, should propose to destroy the institutions themselves.

But the example of Scotland is cited by the opponents of Poor-laws. Why, Scotland furnishes the strongest argument in favour of Poor-laws. Nearly a century after Poor-laws had been established in England, what was the state of Scotland? It is described, in 1698, by Fletcher of Saltoun; who says, "There were then 200,000 sturdy beggars in Scotland, who, if you would not give them alms, took them by force." What did the Government of those days, having experienced for nearly a century the advantages and benefits of Poor-laws, do for Scotland? In the Second Report of Evidence on the State of the Irish poor, Dr. Chalmers states, "In the reign of William and Mary there were no less than two Acts passed, and four proclamations issued, on the subject of the Scottish Poor Laws; all evincing the utmost earnestness, on the part of the Legislature, to establish a compulsory provision in Scotland. The proclamation of the 3rd of March, 1698, complains of the inefficacy of all former Acts and Proclamations; orders correction-houses to be built, one in each of the larger towns for the benefit of the surrounding districts, that should, under a penalty of 500 marks for each quarter's delay, after a specified time, provide work for the unemployed. The Sheriffs were further required to see this executed, under a penalty of 500 marks in the first instance, and then 500*l.* for each week of their delay. The Magistrates were ordered to support the poor till those correction-houses should be provided; and the Kirk Sessions were empowered to see to the execution of the Acts." Now, what were the effects of these measures? Dr. Chalmers says, "that only nineteen years afterwards, Scotland, as if *per sultum*, became tranquil, obedient to the laws, and prosperous." The Doctor, I am quite aware, endeavours to account for this happy change in the condition of Scotland, by ascribing it "to the institution of schools, and the zeal of the clergy." But the House will, I think, agree with me in ascribing it to the wisdom and vigour of the Government in repressing vagrancy and establishing Poor-laws. It may be objected that there was not in Scotland a compulsory assessment. No; but under the salutary fear of a compulsory assessment, the heritors assessed themselves.

But let me again call the attention of the House to Ireland herself. The principle of the Poor-laws has been tried in Ireland, and found to succeed. In the city of Dublin, in the year 1818, an Association was entered into for the suppression of Mendicity. The House will, perhaps, allow me to read, from the First Report of this Institution, the causes of its formation. "The City presented a spectacle at once afflicting and disgusting to the feelings of its inhabitants; the doors of carriages and shops, to the interruption of business, were beset by crowds of unfortunate and clamorous beggars, exhibiting misery and decrepitude in a variety of forms, and frequently carrying about in their persons and garments the seeds of contagious disease: themselves the victims of idleness, their children were taught to depend on begging, as affording the only means of future subsistence; every artifice was resorted to by the practised beggar to extort alms, and refusal was frequently followed by imprecations and threats. The benevolent were imposed upon—the modest shocked—the reflecting grieved—the timid alarmed. In short, so distressing was the whole scene, and so intolerable was the nuisance, that its suppression became a matter of necessity."

I have the satisfaction to inform the House, that this Institution in Dublin has succeeded admirably. Mendicancy has been repressed, vice corrected, ignorance instructed, and the habits of the poor improved. But, alas! it is found that voluntary contributions for its support, although every one admits the abundant usefulness and absolute necessity of the Institution, are uncertain and precarious. To prove this, I need only state, that out of 11,500 solvent houses in Dublin, only 2,000 contribute anything to this Institution. The inhabitants of Dublin, therefore, after having, for fifteen years, experienced the numerous advantages of this Institution, now entreat the House to make its support compulsory. They do more—they ask you to extend the benefits of this Institution, by the establishment of Poor-laws, to the whole of Ireland. Here is nothing merely theoretical: this institution has been tried; it has stood the test of long experience; and the inhabitants of Dublin, with the Duke of Leinster at their head, now testify in the strongest manner to its utility, by entreating this House to give it the sanction of the law; and to establish Poor-laws throughout the whole of Ireland. Need I say one word more?

But there is one objection which I cannot pass by. If, it is said, you employ the able-bodied but destitute poor, will you not in the same degree lessen the capital applicable to the employment of the independent labourer? Now I submit to the House, that this question implies a want of attention to circumstances and to the nature of circulating capital. In times of peace, and order and security, capital possesses, if I may use the expression, an expansive power; another element is generated, which is credit. I will endeavour to illustrate this. In times of confidence and credit, a person draws a bill for 500*l.*, which a banker discounts. The money so obtained is employed in labour; and this labour reproduces the capital so employed with a profit. But, assuming capital to be a fixed and limited sum, it is obvious, in seasons of alarm, such as almost constantly occur in Ireland, that the capitalist, who is generally timid, will hoard his money, and not employ it. Now, Poor-laws occasion peace, and order, and security; and these circumstances inspire confidence and create credit. Therefore Poor-laws, instead of diminishing capital, infinitely increase its power and activity; and, as a consequence, add to its quantity.

Another objection is, that you will not find in Ireland the necessary machinery. The same objection might have been made to the introduction of Poor-laws both into England and Scotland. But this objection is frivolous. Never, in my life in England, did I ever know men more benevolent and humane, or more intelligent as to the mode of applying these feelings for the benefit of the poor and of society, than I have met with in Ireland. In going over the Mendicity Institution in Dublin, I was forcibly struck with the perfect knowledge of the subject which the gentlemen, who kindly showed it to me, evinced. The necessary machinery is now, actively, in use in Dublin; and I have good ground for stating, that similar machinery may be found in all the other considerable towns. As to the more remote districts, I am prepared to point out machinery efficient for the purpose. But I will not further anticipate objections.

In the course of the discussions in Parliament, severe remarks have been made by some hon. Gentlemen on Irish landlords; and appeals have been made to their humanity. There are other gentlemen, out of doors, who seem to think that poverty, and misery, and vice, are not merely incident to, but inherent in, human nauture; and that they should be left to correct themselves. Sir, if the poverty and misery of the Irish peasantry could be fairly attributed to the dispensations of Providence—if summer and winter, seed-time and harvest, did not succeed each other,—if the earth no longer gave her increase,—and if, therefore, pestilence and famine wasted them,—there might be some seeming reason for charging God foolishly. But since, in Ireland, the Divine Giver of all good has been so munificent in His bounties,* let us not, ungratefully and impiously, blame Him for evils which are caused by ourselves. Nor, as respects the alleged misconduct of Irish Landlords, let us, as Legislators, indulge in puerile complaints against individuals, for not being humane. Sir, in saying this, I hope it will not be supposed, that I am deaf to the calls of humanity, or dead to feelings of compassion for the sufferings of my fellow-creatures. But, Sir, these are not the motives which govern my conduct in the discharge of my duties in this House. In earnestly recommending the great measure of which I am an humble advocate, I stand upon the broad and immoveable foundation of justice and sound policy. I seek not, by a parliamentary Act, to make men kind and charitable, but to enforce justice. I seek to make it the urgent and commanding interest of the landlords of Ireland to prevent pauperism and its attendant evils to the utmost of their power. It was a just remark of an eminent Judge from the Bench, "That it is not for human laws and human legislation to do that which belongs to Him alone who can rule the hearts of men—to make them what they ought to be; but it is for human laws and human legislation to protect and save society from the inconvenience of men's being what they are."

I beg leave humbly to move the following Resolution:—

"That it is the opinion of this House, that the establishment of a provision for the Poor of Ireland, on the principle of the Act 43rd Elizabeth, with such alterations and improvements as time and circumstances may require, is expedient and necessary to the interests of the United Kingdom."

Mr. *James Grattan* felt great pleasure in seconding the Resolution. He had ever held, that till the poor of Ireland were secured against famine and its consequences, it was vain to expect tranquillity in Ireland, and every day's experience was a too painful corroboration of his opinion. He would confidently rest his case on this single principle—that a man uncertain of his daily bread,—a starving man,—was necessarily a savage, who was incapable of that prospective and temperate course of conduct which was the essential condition of peace and prosperity. The Irish poor eked out a miserable existence between famine and rapine; they were able and willing to work, but there was no work for them. They saw the means of comfortable subsistence around them; they were nevertheless destitute in their native land. They were, moreover, a sensitive and irritable people. Was it to be expected, under these circumstances, that they should be peaceable and obedient to the law. He expected that the present Motion would be met by clap-trap appeals to the one-sided, partial, and evidently got-up scraps of evidence contained in the reports of the deputy poor-law commissioners just published for the occasion. Apart from the illogical unfairness of arguing against the use from the abuse, he would protest against these appeals as being necessarily partial and imperfect. It would have been but common justice in Ministers to have suspended the publication of these extracts till the whole of the evidence and the general report was ready for publication. But even this got-up one-sided evidence would fail in its object. If they wished to retain Ireland as an essential and profitable portion of the Empire, they must induce the Irish people to respect the laws, and to induce them to respect the laws the Irish must be taught that the laws were protective, conciliatory, just, and impartial. What was their present system—was it protective, conciliatory, just, and impartial? Certainly, if the Insurrection Act was conciliatory, and if starvation, rapine, and then hanging or transportation were the proofs of conciliation. Since the Union there was hardly an interval of two or three years without the Insurrection Act being enforced; and till they applied a remedy to the parent evil—a want of employment and a legal security against starvation—things would not, indeed could not, grow better. The fact was, there was no choice between the most iron coercion, or the remedial policy of Poor-laws; and if they were seriously determined to apply a remedy to the ills of Ireland which the Union had undoubtedly produced, they would give the Irish peasant an interest in its preservation. It was, unfortunately, a too easy task to show that the poor of Ireland were in a condition of misery so great as to call upon the Legislature for some remedy. Mr. Sadler had shown, that such was the case in his able and unanswerable speech delivered last Session, in which it was put beyond cavil, that in consequence of the want of provision for the indigent, famine was the frequent visitant of Ireland. Their state of miserable existence reduced the duration of life at least eight per cent lower than it was in England. That was the constant state of their miserable being. They had heard much of the advantages of expending capital in local improvements; the fact was, experience had demonstrated, that such expenditure, when partial, was only mischievous, and that, to be beneficial, it must be universal. Did a gentleman expend thousands in giving employment to the poor in his neighbourhood, he immediately attracted all the floating misery for miles and miles about him, with a view to profiting by his benevolence. But evidently the heartless landlord, from whose district this horde of paupers had emigrated, was *pro tanto* benefited at the expense of the humane and upright. Then, unless the giving employment were made compulsory, the absentee landlord would never apply himself to the improvement of his estate, so long as his agent could extract the rent from the impoverished tenants. Make him provide employment for the poor on his estate, and in self-defence he would betake himself to domestic improvements. As it was, the only semblance of improvements attempted in Ireland were those of the justly repudiated jobbing system of Grand Jury Assessments. Again he repeated, that they had no choice between iron coercion or conciliating the poor by insuring them against destitution, and affording them profitable employment—between the Repeal of the Union and Poor-laws. They had already exhausted every expedient and means of staving off Poor-laws. They had Mr. Wilmot Horton and his Emigration Committee, and, that justly failing, they had Mr. Rice's Committee got up to make out a case against the adoption of Poor-laws. The evidence given before that Committee, however, was itself the antidote of the purpose for which it was appointed. He called upon the House to compel the Irish landlords to do their duty to themselves, their tenants, and their country. It was the cause of humanity and true religion. Already the Irish landlords had obtained their 40*s*. Disfranchisement Act, which cleared their estates of the poor villains when no longer useful upon the hustings; and then they had their Subletting Act, which prevented those unfortunate outcasts from again settling down upon the soil upon which they were born. And yet, in the face of these facts, the Irish landlords hypocritically talked of the abuses and demoralizing effects of the English Poor-laws. Out upon such barefaced, such sordid hypocrisy; it was not the abuses, but the long-tried, long-proved uses, of the Poor-laws that he demanded for Ireland. Let them look at the beneficial consequences of the partial attempts that had been made towards affording the poor of Ireland employment. In the western districts of Ireland a large army, distributed over twelve barracks, was hardly sufficient to keep the peace, when Mr. Griffiths, the mining engineer, under the direction of the Government, superintended the application of some money, about 140,000*l.* or 150,000*l.*—to public works for some ten years: such was the beneficial result of this employment as a mere means of restoring social order, that eleven out of twelve of those barracks, with their military occupants, were dispensed with. And so it would be, though to a greater extent, under a general system of employment. These facts proved, that what had hitherto been attempted for the pacification of Ireland had been in vain. Let not the first reformed House of Commons act towards Ireland as its predecessors had uniformly done,—impose upon her acts of coercion, instead of granting her measures of relief; if they did, all hope of making Ireland of benefit to this country was at an end. Ireland had a right to Poor-laws: she acquired that right by the Act of Union, and if they were not granted, he would not only join in the cry for the Repeal of the Union, but would go further, and say, that he would not live in a country where martial law prevailed, and where he was compelled to see his countrymen starving around him. Mr. O'Connor, a Catholic clergyman, who gave evidence before a Committee of the House last year, stated, that the poor peasants were accustomed to exclaim to him, "We cannot live upon 8*d.* a-day." He agreed with them; it was impossible for the peasantry of Ireland to be satisfied, whilst the produce which their hands had raised was exported to England to furnish the means of supplying luxuries to absentee landlords. The hon. member concluded by expressing a hope that the Reformed House of Commons would adopt a measure which would make them live in the grateful recollection of the people of Ireland.

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* It has been justly remarked of Ireland, "that there never was a country for which God appears to have done so much, and man so little."

Lord *Althorp:* I agree, Sir, with the hon. Gentleman who has proposed the Motion, that this is a subject of the greatest possible importance; and I think, also, that it requires the greatest consideration to be bestowed upon it before we adopt it. I must say, however, that considering the evils which we know to exist in the Poor Law system of this country, it would have been more advisable for the hon. Member not to move a direct Resolution, declaring that Poor-laws should be adopted in Ireland, without explaining, at the same time, how he expects to remedy those evils in applying the system to Ireland. There is one part of the speech of the hon. Member which I hope will not have much weight with this House. I hope that this House will consider the question of the Poor-laws with reference to the benefit to be conferred upon Ireland, and upon Ireland alone, by their introduction; and that the argument which he has used to show that the introduction of Poor-laws into Ireland would be beneficial to England, by preventing the annual influx of Irish labourers into this country; and that the appeal which he afterwards made on the same topic to English Members—I say I hope that this argument and this appeal will not have much effect. Nothing can be more unfit, nothing can be more unworthy of English Members, than that they should vote for a measure for Ireland, not because it would be beneficial to Ireland, but because it would be beneficial to England. The hon. Gentleman has made a most extraordinary statement on this subject, and I should wish to caution the House against supposing, that because great distress exists in Ireland, it therefore follows as a matter of course that the introduction of Poor-laws there would remedy that distress, and prove of the highest advantage to Ireland. The hon. Member says, that the effect of the Poor-laws in this country has been most beneficial; that they have separated virtue from dissoluteness, and industry from idleness. I am sorry to say, that the experience we have had of the Poor-laws in England has rather shown the reverse to be the fact. I admit, that this has not been the necessary consequence of the Poor-laws themselves. I am inclined to believe, that a great deal of the evil has been caused by the faulty administration of those laws. As they are at present administered, the effect of them certainly is to take away the inducements to industry, and to place the industrious on the same footing as the idle. The hon. member for Wicklow who seconded the Motion said, that he would join the hon. and learned member for Dublin, and cry out for a Repeal of the Union, unless Poor-laws were introduced into Ireland. I shall only observe upon this, that if they join in their object, they certainly will not agree in their reasons; for the hon. and learned Member does not pretend to put the want of Poor-laws forward as one of the grounds on which he has raised the question of the Repeal. The object that I have in addressing the House thus early, is to request that they will not rush hand over head into the adoption of this measure; that they will not declare Poor-laws expedient for Ireland, without first making due inquiry—without ascertaining what will be the effect of the Poor-laws there—what will be the means of preventing abuses in them, and, above all, whether there are not, at this moment, institutions possessed of funds to a considerable amount, which, by law, are applicable to the relief of the Poor. All these points ought to be inquired into before we adopt this Resolution of the hon. Member. It is desirable, too, that we should inquire into the state of the poorer classes in Ireland—how far the poorer classes of people are differently situated in the two countries—and to ascertain whether the effect of such difference is to the disadvantage of the poorer classes in Ireland; and if so, whether those disadvantages might be removed from any system of Poor-laws that we should think proper to introduce into Ireland. Although I am not prepared to say, that Poor-laws ought not to be introduced into Ireland, I do feel considerable doubt and hesitation as to the question whether the introduction of such a measure would be beneficial or not. The effect of the system here appears to have been to lead the labouring classes to trust to the Poor-laws for their ultimate support, and not to exert sufficient industry or providence to maintain themselves. If I am right in the idea which I have formed of what the lower classes of the population of Ireland are, I do not think that they would be less likely to trust to the support to be afforded them by the Poor-laws than the population of England. On the contrary, I believe they would be more likely to do so, and that the effect of the introduction of the Poor-laws into Ireland would be to induce the poorer classes in that country to be even less provident than they are said to be at present. Indeed, I think that they would conceive a sort of imputation on their discernment and skill, if they did not contrive, by some means or other, to get frequent assistance from them. There are two or three modes by which we might proceed in making the inquiries I propose to institute. We might appoint a Committee of this House for the purpose of inquiry, but there are many and great objections to such a Committee. One effect of it would be, to bring evidence from Ireland at a considerable expence, and, after all, it might possibly be said, that that evidence had been brought, because it was in accordance with the particular opinions of the Gentlemen who had sent for it. The hon. Gentleman has expressed himself dissatisfied with the inquiry instituted in the year 1830, and other persons might, in like manner, be dissatisfied with an inquiry of the same kind now, and we should not attain the end which we all desire. I think, therefore, and the Government, taking all the circumstances into consideration, are of opinion, that the inquiry should take place in Ireland itself; and for that purpose I intend to move as an Amendment to the Motion of the hon. Member, that an Address be presented to the Crown, praying that a Commission may be appointed. In drawing up that Motion—having stated, as I have, my own doubts upon the subject, and my wish that the House should remain unpledged till full information is laid before them—I shall endeavour to word it in such a manner as not to give any opinion whatever as to the propriety or impropriety of introducing Poor-laws into Ireland. The Amendment I shall move is this—"That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, praying that he will be graciously pleased to direct a Commission to issue, to inquire into the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland, and into the various institutions at present established by law in that country for their relief." I do not think it right to call upon them to report their opinion as to what is expedient to be done. All that I should require from them is, that they should lay the case fairly before this House—that they should state what is the condition of the population in Ireland, in order that the House might have the case brought fairly before it, and may be able to determine whether Poor-laws should be introduced into Ireland; and what alterations should be made in the English system to adapt it to Ireland. If the House should come to the conclusion that no Poor-laws should be introduced in Ireland at least, it would have the means of deciding that question with a degree of authority; and of showing, that it is not from a want of humanity—not from a want of sympathy with the Irish people—that we so decide it; but because, looking at their best interests, we have felt compelled so to act. This is the proposition which I have to make; I hope it will be sufficient to satisfy the hon. Member, and that he will not wish to press the House to adopt a positive Resolution, but will be content to wait until we can get this information which I propose to procure by the means of this Commission.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, that he wished to be permitted to second the Amendment of the noble Lord. In making that offer, the House would perceive that he intended to convey his humble approbation of this mode of proceeding. He did come down to the House determined to trespass upon the patience of the House, perhaps, to exhaust it, by making observations at some length upon the proposition of the hon. Member. The proposition which had been made by the noble Lord had dispensed with a great deal of what he had intended to say, especially with that part of it which he meant to urge in favour of delay and of full inquiry before they plunged into what seemed to him the horrors of the Poor-laws. No man had a stronger personal interest in supporting Poor-laws than he had. By recommending them, he should obtain the affectionate confidence of a class of men whom he esteemed most highly—he should get a great deal of approbation from the Catholic Clergy of Ireland, who were strongly disposed to favour the introduction of the Poor-laws, coming in contact, as they did, with the misery of the people, and being naturally anxious to find some tangible relief for that misery. If he could bring his mind to think that the Poor-laws would be advisable, and if he were to state that to be his opinion, there would soon be a cry for them in Ireland that would be irresistible. If he were disposed to agitate Ireland for purposes that would lead to the shaking of the foundations of society, and that would tend to revolution and to the insecurity of property, he did not know one subject more likely to influence the minds of men, particularly of the uneducated, than this subject of the Poor-laws. He could, by means of this subject, influence all those who were most reckless of life when in pursuit of objects that they thought would be beneficial to them, but he was thoroughly convinced that he could not do so without a sacrifice of principle, and he must seek his private advantage by a violation of what he esteemed a conscientious duty. So far as the hon. Member had spoken of the distress of the people of Ireland, the case he had brought forward was most fully made out. There was no doubt of the distress of the country, and instead of being diminished, it was increased—increased too by the strong arm of the law. He was not going to discuss the Coercion Bill, but he must say, that the strong arm of the law encouraged bad landlords, of whom he did not pretend to speak with forbearance, to act with greater rigour than ever towards their tenants. There were more notices to quit served from the 25th of March and the 1st of May than there had been for twenty years past. There was not any demand upon the peasantry that was not now rigorously enforced, and the result was such, that he was sure the Government would require the same Act next year, in order to repress those heart-burnings that the misconduct of bad landlords, acting under the protection of the present Bill, had occasioned. It was said, that the Poor-laws would assist in putting an end to the disorders among the peasantry. He did not entertain that opinion. The Report of the Commissioners on the Poor-laws of this country did not show that to have been the case here, where the burnings of ricks had taken place, not in the spirit of what the Whitefoot called the wild justice of revenge, but in a spirit which the Irish peasantry had never manifested. The Whitefeet committed murder from a thirst of vengeance not from a spirit of plunder. When the hon. Member talked of this country being in a state of subordination in consequence of the Poor-laws, had he forgotten the frightful disturbances which prevailed within the last two years? England was far from being tranquil at the present moment: within the last week he had read in the newspapers an account of 400 head of cattle having been burnt alive by the act of some wretched incendiary. The hon. member for the county of Wicklow found fault with the Report which had been presented from the Poor-law Commissioners. He talked of the evidence being partial or garbled. This was a serious charge. Now who were these Commissioners?—the Bishop of London, the Bishop of Chester, Mr. Sturges Bourne, Mr. Senior, and Mr. Coulson. It had been stated that the Poor-laws had had the effect, in this country, of protecting property, and of preserving the public peace. What evidence had they of that? Was it in the incendiary burnings that had spread horror through the country a-year and a half ago? Did the Poor-law Commissioners authorize any such statement? No such thing; they showed that through the operation of the Poor-laws, in many parts of England, the moral feeling of the lower classes of society had been deeply injured. He would refer to the Report of those Commissioners, if they talked of the beneficial operation of these laws. If ever there was a book of authority published on any subject, it was this Report. This afforded a sufficient number of cases, illustrative of the working of the system in England—a system, which, he hoped to God, would never be introduced into Ireland. No one had yet ventured to contradict a single case stated in this book, and there were Members who would be sufficiently ready with refutations, if they could adduce them. When he read the horrid detail of cases stated in this Report —when he found what had been the fruits of the Poor-laws in England; that they had gone far to sap the very foundations of society—that they had destroyed the best feelings of the human breast—that they had torn asunder all the ties of social life—that they had set fathers against their children, and children against their fathers —that they had implanted a principle of brutal selfishness in the breasts of those who came within their baneful influence—he turned with horror from the idea of introducing such a system into Ireland. This Report emanated from a body of men, incapable of deception, who could have no possible motive for deceiving Parliament, and who, at the same time, had a thousand eyes upon them, ready to detect any error into which they might happen to fall. This book afforded undeniable evidence, that these laws destroyed all motives to industry that they created habits of improvidence—that they held out premiums to vice in a thousand ways—that they encouraged marriages based upon the most sordid, and shameful, and degrading motives—that they operated as a constant incentive to crime, by destroying everything like a sense of moral feeling. This volume closed with a description of the operation of the Bastardy Laws, which he would not then enter upon. It was sufficient to say, that the destruction of female virtue was generated by the system; and that prostitution was rewarded by the Poor-laws. When, therefore, he heard hon. Gentlemen contend that all these evils arose from the abuse of the Poor-laws, he would ask them to get rid of the abuse, and to show him that such evils were not the natural fruits of the system itself. He entreated them not to send over a system of laws to his country which would produce such effects as were described in this Report. It was said, however, "we do not wish to introduce the English system of Poor-laws into Ireland;" but the hon. member for Knaresborough, during the whole course of his speech, dwelt on the blessings which he alleged to have resorted from the English system of Poor-laws—he put them forward as the glory and boast of England—and said that the tranquillity of the country was mainly to be attributed to their operation. The hon. member had not pointed out—he could not point out—how those evils which the Poor-laws had produced in England, could be avoided under any other system. Then, again, it was said, that the introduction of the Poor-laws into Ireland would prevent the annual influx of Irish labourers into this country. It would have no such effect; but, on the contrary, when the Irish landlords found they had to support the family of the poor Irish peasant, they would find it their interest to send the man himself off to England; and as he would not have, as now, to save money for the support of his family, he would be able to work at even a less rate of wages than at present. But surely that was not to be a reason for agreeing to the Poor-laws for Ireland; and if their poor came here to make labour cheap, surely the evil was balanced by their rich coming here to make labour dear, and to expend in this country the money produced by the industry of the Irish labourer in his own country. It must be recollected, also, that the Irish supplied the manufacturing towns with cheap food. If there were a resident gentry in Ireland, the food would still be sent to England, for manufactures or money; but now, instead of the produce of the sale of the Irish corn and cattle being sent back to Ireland, it was spent here, by the Irish landlord. God had blessed Ireland with a most fruitful soil; but the inhabitants did not gain by it in consequence of the system of misgovernment to which they had been so long exposed. He would tell them, the British House of Commons, that they were responsible for this state of things; and not the people of Ireland. It was too much, then, to say, that the English labourer should be benefited at the expense of the Irish labourer. If the English had grievances, let them get rid of them; but not by removing the burthen from their own shoulders, to place it on those of men whom they had already so deeply injured. What was to become of the Union between the two countries, if those labourers whose hands had cultivated the wheat and corn, and reared the cattle, which were annually sent to this country for the rent of the absentee landlord, were to be shouted back to their Irish parishes lest they should interfere with the English labourer. The hon. Gentleman who had brought forward this question, had alluded to the effect of the introduction of Poor-laws in the reign of Elizabeth, and said, that at that period pauperism—which had spread far and wide —was effectually stopped by them. Nothing could, in his opinion, be more fallacious than the argument of the hon. Gentleman. The 43rd of Elizabeth was the year 1601. About that period, England established no less than eight colonies in North America. This afforded a vent for a large body of her population; and about the same time, an impetus was given to commerce all over the world. At the end of fifty years, a civil war broke out in this country, which occasioned a great waste of the population—first in England, and subsequently in Ireland. The destruction of human life, during that war, was very considerable in England; but, according to Sir William Petty, the population of Ireland was reduced by it from 3,000,000 to a 1,500,000; and Englishmen and Scotchmen were sent to fill up the vacuum thus created. Therefore, the argument of the hon. Gentleman, as to the effect of the Poor-laws in England, during the seventeenth century, was not of much weight. Since that time, the country had greatly increased in commercial wealth; and various new manufactures had been discovered; and for a few years after the breaking out of the French war, the country was so rich that the Poor-laws might rather be considered a charitable fund than as a means of relief, to which the poor man was entitled to resort. But now only the evils of the system came upon the country when staggering under a load of debt; having to bear an enormous taxation; and when its manufactures were competed with by those of other nations. Now only the result of the Poor-laws appeared in the state of society which he had alluded to; and which, God forbid! should ever exist in Ireland. He trusted that the House would never consent to try the experiment of the Poor-laws in a country so situated as Ireland. He would ask any advocate of this proposition whether he thought that the adoption of the Poor-laws would make Ireland richer, or that she would gain an additional guinea by them? This question could not be answered in the affirmative. The Poor-laws could not be regarded as a prize in the lottery of legislation; and Ireland would not become richer by their adoption. The truth was, that the Poor-laws would only create a different distribution of property. He was not desirous of putting an end to fever hospitals, or infirmaries, or institutions of that description; on the contrary, he trusted that means would be adopted greatly to enlarge the field of their utility. This, he hoped, would be one of the objects of inquiry involved in the proposition of the noble Lord. He was willing to join with any man in making those institutions more useful, but he would never consent to any measure which went to give relief in the shape of alms to the able-bodied labourer, as he was satisfied that the only result of this system of relief would be, to hold out a premium to idleness. But it might be said, "why not give relief to the labourer who is unable to obtain work? If there be no labour for him to perform, and he is unable to obtain food, he would soon become a proper object for the infirmary." In reply to this, he would observe, that no man would go into the infirmary as an excuse for idleness; but if money were given to the able-bodied man, a temptation would be held out to all other men to abandon their work. This was a very different order of things from that which would exist if relief were not given to those able to work. How very easy it was to be imposed upon by a man who was too lazy to work. It was quite certain if a man could not claim relief as a right, that he would work if he could get employment; and he would make every exertion to do so. If he could claim relief from the parish, and obtain the means of subsistence without labour, it was equally certain that he would avail himself of them. The love of ease was a principle of human nature; no man would labour for his food if he could obtain it without. But it was said, that the abuses complained of had originated in the maladministration of the Poor-laws; and that if proper persons were got to administer them, all the ills that at present resulted from them would cease. It appeared, then, that all that the present system of English Poor-laws required was, proper persons to carry them into effect. It was, however, not merely necessary that a man selected for such office should be extremely intelligent and industrious, but he must also be removed above the influence of human passions—he must be indifferent to the affectation of appearing humane—he must be a man who would take the trouble, in every case, to get at the truth, and be perfectly indifferent to the applause or censure of the rest of the world. If they could get such men to conduct the administration of Poor-laws, then, indeed, they might avoid abuses; but if such men could be procured, Ministers should resign their own offices at once, and leave the administration of public affairs to them. But was the charge just, that the Poor-laws were badly administered in England? He contended when he considered those who administered the Poor-laws—that the fault did not lie with their administration, but in their system; in that system, so contrary to all sound principle, which gave one man a right over the property of another. The present administrators of the Poor-laws were the Magistrates and the country gentlemen of England. They were men spoken of in the highest terms by all; and, taking them as a class, no body of men, undoubtedly, could exceed them in humanity; while, at the same time, they were remarkable for their attention and care in the administration of the law. Such, then, was the class of persons who had the administration of the Poor-laws, and yet it was said, that the evils were not in the system. In reply, he would ask, before it was resolved to introduce such laws into Ireland, either to find out a better set of administrators than they had in England, or to devise a system of Poor-laws which was not liable to the objections which were urged against that of this country. Was it true, that the English gentry had neglected their duty, and had been so indifferent to their own interests as to allow a state of things such as existed at present to grow up? A state of things under which the agricultural population had become demoralized, and under which, in many parts, the land had been thrown out of cultivation, as it would not bear the charge of the Poor-laws? He must deny that the fault rested with the gentry—it was in the system itself; in that system which involved the solecism of political economy, the giving one man a right in the property of another. He knew he should be told, when he saw the effect of these laws in England, that the non-introduction of them into Ireland was an act of inhumanity! This he would deny; and he was satisfied that no laws could be devised better calculated to destroy the feelings of humanity in the breasts of the population, than this system of Poor-laws. These feelings, he was happy to say, yet existed in Ireland. God had planted them deep in the hearts of that people; and the voice of revealed religion, at least told him that it was a duty to perform acts of charity—that if he expected reward hereafter, he must wipe away the tear from the eye of the widow and the orphan—and that he must relieve those who were in affliction and distress. Thank God! the feeling was general in Ireland, to afford relief to those who were in distress. They had had constant religious feuds; but, in times of want and distress, the differences of the Orangemen and the Catholic were forgotten, and they joined to afford equal and ready relief to their fellow-countrymen, without any reference to their religious differences. He was not guilty of any exaggeration as to the degree in which that feeling prevailed. He knew that it existed in Ireland and Scotland; and was checked in England, only by the feeling, that if charity was distributed in a parish, it operated as an inducement to other paupers to resort there; and that thus a man, by distributing alms to the necessitous, might do an injury to his neighbours by increasing the Poor-rates. Reference had been made in the course of the present discussion to the state of the poor in Scotland, and the authority of Fletcher of Saltoun, was quoted in support of the position, that the condition of the people of Scotland afforded good proof that Ireland should be subjected to the influence of a Poor-law. Now, both from Fletcher of Saltoun, and from the evidence of Dr. Chalmers, it was plain, beyond the possibility of dispute, that the peace which ensued in Scotland at the time to which they referred, was owing, not to the establishment of a provision for the poor, but to the removal of all causes of religious discord. There was at that time an end to the persecutions of the Episcopalians—it was not a Poor-law, but liberty of conscience, which gave quiet to Scotland. He would then mention that Dr. Chalmers and others, had shown that the feeling of attachment between parents and children was very strong both in Ireland and Scotland, but the evidence collected by the Poor-law Commissioners proved, that among the poor of England that feeling was almost unknown. Dr. Doyle said, that the want of affection on the part of children in Ireland was amazingly rare. The Commissioners proved, that in England its existence was a greater rarity. The hon. and learned Gentleman read an extract from the Report of the Commissioners to prove his assertion. There was one other subject connected with the Poor-laws to which he had not yet adverted, but respecting which it was impossible to be silent; he alluded to the demoralizing influence of the laws affecting bastardy, which arose out of the provision for the poor, as it existed in England. It was, as the House well knew, in some parts of the country, an extremely good speculation for a man to marry a woman who had had two bastards. Good God! could he be then speaking of Englishmen? He did not for a moment mean to insinuate that Englishmen did not naturally entertain as just a sense of personal propriety and domestic honour as other men; but, merciful Heaven! how they must have been degraded and demoralized by the Poor-laws, before they could have sunk to such a depth below the moral dignity of other nations, as thus to speculate for subsistence upon a double prostitution, and live upon the produce of their wife's dishonour! They might impose what restrictions they thought proper on the unfortunate Irish—they might, in the exercise of the power intrusted to them, abuse their authority, and make Ireland the subject of the severest and most tyrannical regulations which the perverted ingenuity of man could devise; but, do what they might, let them, above all things, not destroy the sense of personal independence which still remained in that country. The hon. and learned Member concluded by seconding Lord Althorp's Amendment.

Mr. *D. W. Harvey* observed, that if what the hon. and learned member for Dublin said, was founded in fact, and sound in reasoning, it would amount to this—that though he (the member for Dublin) had all his life been protesting against the tyrannical government of Ireland—though he had ever been disclaiming against the cruel and arbitrary laws imposed upon the Irish people, and the desolation which those laws spread over the land, and the degraded condition to which the people were in consequence reduced—yet now he came forward to picture to them the moral beauty, the propriety, and the rectitude, which, if they were to take his representation for the fact, showed that Poor-laws were not only not wanted in Ireland, but would be positively mischievous. The speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman was as much directed against the Amendment of the noble Lord as the proposition of the hon. Member, for, according to the hon. and learned Member, inquiries even were not necessary. The object of the Government was manifest. It wanted to get rid of a troublesome and difficult subject, and throw it on the shoulders of Commissioners. They had no plan of their own—they were, perhaps, incapable of forming a plan, and they thought that they might slumber on in their places doing nothing, if they delegated part of their power to a few well paid Commissioners. The hon. and learned Gentleman, by his arguments, lent himself to the doctrines of the political economists, who treated man as if he was a machine, or an article of merchandise, and who would apply to human beings the rules of supply and demand, and contend that these intelligent beings could be subjected, as if they were bales of cloth or barrels of sugar. He regretted that the hon. and learned member for Dublin, possessing, as he did, so much influence in Ireland, should lend himself to opinions so adverse to the commonest feelings of humanity, and so opposed to every right that man could claim of society. It was not then, he hoped, a matter to be discussed, but to be taken for granted, that the people of every country were entitled to subsistence—that the rich were but the trustees of the poor—that the fee-simple of the land was in the children of Heaven, the great body of the people. In Ireland at various times, the people, in consequence of some periodical famine, or its uniform follower, pestilence, were seen upon the roads or in the ditches by thousands; and was it to be endured that appeals on behalf of human beings so circumstanced should be met by the dry calculations of political economy? The history of past centuries had shown them that there could be no security for property until something like a provision for the poor had been established; and were they to be told that the first objects of humanity, and the most obvious dictates of prudence, were to be set at nought for the sake of fine theories? The English system of Poor-laws had been grievously decried; but he would put this question—had not all the evils which they produced arisen within the last thirty years? The legislation of recent years, and not the Act of Elizabeth, had been the fertile source of the disorders which were the cause of what he admitted to be well-founded complaints. He asserted that the 8,000,000*l.* paid under the name of a Poor-rate was not a Poor-rate in reality; it was wages belonging to the labourer, which, by various contrivances, had been carried to the Poor-rate, in order to relieve those who ought to pay, and throw the burthen on those who ought not. If the poor man was to receive no succour from the law, let him then not be oppressed by the law. Make the necessaries of life cheap to him, and do not tax the bread which he eats. The poor would be quite willing to give up the 8,000,000*l.* they received in the shape of Poor-rate, if the landlords would only forego the 15,000,000*l.* they took from the poor by raising the price of their bread. He did not think, that the powers given to the Commission proposed by the noble Lord were comprehensive enough, but he trusted it would be an honest one. He thought they ought to be directed to inquire into the state of distress existing among the labourers, and to explore its cause. Was it to be wondered at that so much crime existed in Ireland when no steps were taken to relieve it? If they deplored the amount of crime in that unhappy country, why, he asked, did they make it? He contended that a poor man could only preserve his existence in Ireland by becoming a criminal. That was the only means left him of asserting the integrity of his nature, and his right to a subsistence. In his opinion no very great difficulties existed to the introduction of a Poor-law into Ireland. The ground was clear; there was nothing to do away—no deep-rooted prejudices to remove; and he thought that, instead of waiting until they regenerated their own Poor-laws, they should at once apply an improved plan to Ireland, and adapt whatever advantages might be discovered in its operation to the English system.

Mr. *Slaney* thought, that the noble Lord (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) had adopted the only practical course, under all the circumstances of the case, and he felt confident that the Commission to be appointed would be an honest and a comprehensive one. He was opposed to the application of the English Poor-law system to Ireland; and he thought that there was a marked distinction between the title which the able-bodied man, impoverished by his own imprudence, had to relief, and the right possessed by the aged and afflicted. He did not object to the immigration of the Irish poor into this country, but as the effect of that was to depress the English labourer, he thought that a fair ground existed for entering into a calm inquiry how far provision might be made for the poor of Ireland. He should support the appointment of the Commission, because, if the establishment of a modified system of Poor-laws were not recommended by it, some useful measures for ameliorating the condition of the people would be suggested.

Mr. *Henry Grattan* said, the present Motion, which was one out of twelve which stood on the books referring to the distress of the people, had been brought forward with the view to relieve the people of Ireland; and how had it been met? The noble Lord had proposed as an Amendment the appointment of a Commission to inquire into the subject. The Amendment not only affected the present Motion, but also the Motions of which notices had been given by his hon. relative, the member for Wicklow, and by another hon. Gentleman. Thus, then, after all the investigation which the state of the peasantry of Ireland had undergone, it was to be made a subject of renewed investigation by a Commission. But was not Government bound to apply a remedy to the crying evil at once, as well for the sake of the people of England, as for the suffering population of Ireland? He was convinced of the fact,—that most of the objections which had been started to the proposition of the hon. Gentleman arose from ignorance. What had been the main objection of his hon. and learned friend the member for Dublin? He had taken the extracts from the Reports of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the state and administration of the Poor-laws in England; and said, "that the reading of it had satisfied his mind as to the impolicy of introducing Poor-laws into Ireland." By this observation he had proved, that he had altogether mistaken the meaning and object of that book, which was to point out the evils that had arisen from the departures that had taken place from the principle of the Poor-laws. But he would remind his hon. and learned friend, that not one of those who advocated the introduction of Poor-laws into Ireland desired that the English Poor-laws should be adopted. The hon. member for Colchester, had truly said, that they did not wish to carry this system of laws into Ireland, but to have such a system established there as would enable the poor and destitute to obtain relief. The industrious and peaceable peasant had a right to demand support, rather than be suffered to starve. His hon. and learned friend, in the course of his impassioned speech, raked up the evils which had been superinduced on the good principle by the bad system followed in the south of England, and exclaimed—"Good God! will you introduce such a state of things into

Ireland?" He would refer his hon. and learned friend to the able and unanswerable letters of Dr. Doyle. That reverend gentleman was anxious for the adoption of a system of Poor-laws in Ireland; and he pointed out the nature of the system which should be adopted, and by which all those frightful evils that had been caused by the mal-administration and perversion of them in this country might be avoided. But what was the result of the want of a system of Poor-laws in Ireland? In the first place, the people of England were injured by the constant immigration of the Irish; the rate of wages was reduced, the English labourers were thrown out of employment, and became chargeable to their parishes. Secondly, the peasantry of Ireland were deeply interested in the subject. Thirdly, under the present state of things, many of the great landed proprietors of Ireland never contributed one shilling towards the relief of the poor on their estates. He would answer, therefore, the hon. and learned Gentleman, that not only on the ground of humanity, but on every principle of common justice, some measure of this sort ought instantly to be adopted. The supporters of this proposition did not require a system of Poor-laws similar to that now acted upon in this country, but a measure—to use the emphatic words of the Act of Elizabeth—for "the necessary relief of the poor, impotent, old, blind, and such other being poor and not able to work." All the abuses that at present existed, as regarded the Poor-laws, had been grafted on the Act of Elizabeth; and the Government and the Legislature, by sanctioning amendments in the Poor-laws, which amendments had been directly contrary to the spirit of that Act, had incurred an enormous load of responsibility. He considered it to be a moral duty in the House to compel the landed interest of Ireland to contribute to the support of the poor. They were told that all sorts of evils would arise from the introduction of a system of Poor-laws into Ireland. But the fact was, that, at the present moment, there was a Poor-rate in Ireland, but it was paid by those who ought not to pay it. It was paid by the poor themselves, and not by the rich. The rich man built a wall round his domain, and excluded the pauper population; but the poor, among whom they dwelt, could not escape; the poor man's house was open for every supplicant for charity to enter. Surely that House could not be aware of the conduct of those who possessed the largest incomes in Ireland to the pauper population on their estates. Nearly all the large landed proprietors were absentees, and seldom contributed one shilling towards the relief of that distress which their own heartless conduct occasioned. He knew an instance of a person, possessing property to the amount of 80,000*l.* a-year, who, on being pressed to give something to relieve the starving population on his property, gave the paltry sum of 80*l.* On another estate of great value, the proprietor of which refused to give anything, he had himself seen children perfectly naked in their parents' cabins who were preserved, with the utmost difficulty, from absolute starvation. These unhappy persons might rather be said, to repeat the phrase they had heard that night, "to breathe rather than to live." He concurred in the opinion of the hon. member for Colchester, and contended, that every man had a natural right to support. So long as the land produced anything, no one should be allowed to starve. He would refer to the evidence on the Table of the House on the state of Ireland, to demonstrate the absolute necessity of doing something for the permanent relief of the population. All the witnesses examined before the Committee of last year had given it as their opinion, that the existence of peace in Ireland depended on relief being given to the poor; and they were consequently advocates for the introduction of a system of Poor-laws. With such evidence, was the House to be told, that any interference with this subject was pregnant with mischief? Were not hon. Gentlemen aware that the good order of the State depended on the well-being of the people; and that with a starving population it was impossible to have peace? Every day's experience tended more and more to convince him, that the peace of Ireland, and the integrity of the empire depended upon the adoption of a system of Poor-laws for Ireland. He had taken the trouble to look over the Reports of the Commissioners on the Crown Lands in Ireland, with a view to learn the state of the population on that property, and he would merely refer to the counties of Longford and Monaghan. In the former county, the farmers and peasantry on those lands who could not give money, gave provisions and lodging to no less than 500 destitute persons. In the county of Monaghan upwards of double that number of poor were supported. He had no hesitation in saying, that, on the Crown Lands in the counties of Monaghan and Longford alone, the farmers and peasantry provided food and lodging for upwards of 2,000 of the poor and destitute inhabitants of the country; while the gentry and owners of the soil did not contribute one shilling for that purpose. Thus it was, that the Poor-rate was paid by the poor instead of the rich. And, therefore, he would repeat, that it was the duty of the Legislature to take care that the subsistence of the poor be paid for by those who ought to pay it. Reference had been made to the period when Poor-laws were introduced into England. It must be recollected, that they were adopted in this country in consequence of the poor having, in many districts, been deprived of that aid and assistance which they previously derived from the numerous religious institutions. Previous to the Reformation, there were various hospitals and monasteries, in all parts of the country, where the poor obtained food, and where beds were provided for travellers. With the Catholic Church, all these charitable institutions were abolished; and it became necessary to find some substitute for them. The poor and destitute were formerly supported out of the property of the Church; and the Church should be made now to contribute, as it formerly did, to the support of the poor. He trusted, that the hon. member for Middlesex would take up this point, and press it upon the attention of Parliament, as he could do so with much greater ability and power than he (Mr. Grattan) could pretend to. He trusted, that he would, in the course of the discussions on the affairs of the Irish Church, induce the House to make some provision out of the property of that Church for the pauper population. The Legislature was now about to make a new settlement of Church property; and if they neglected to make the clergy do what their predecessors did, to that extent they would be guilty of a dereliction of duty. Hon. Gentlemen might express doubts as to whether the poor were maintained out of the property of the Church; but he could adduce irrefragable evidence on that point. It would be seen, by reference to a book recently published, entitled *The Irish Gentleman in Search of a Religion*, the writer of which turned out, to the surprise of every one, to be the author of *Little's Poems*, that the principal fathers of the Church—for instance, Origen, Chrysostom, and Jerome—maintained, that the Church was bound to contribute to the support of the poor. He had himself known, that five Coroners' Inquests had sat, within a short period, on the bodies of persons who had died from starvation; and when he was Member for Dublin, the number of persons who were to be seen in that city in a state of starvation and nakedness almost exceeded belief. He had been a member of the Mansion House Committee appointed to distribute the funds raised for the relief of the poor of Ireland, and he could assure the House, that facts of such a deplorable nature were disclosed before that Committee, that they had not the courage to publish an account of the inhumanity of their own countrymen. If England and Ireland should ever be separated—which he trusted in God they never would be—the separation would be caused by the Government of England persisting in its error, and in its excluding the people of Ireland from those good and equal laws under which it was the good fortune of the people of this country to live.

Mr. *Cutlar Fergusson* said, that the powerful speech of the hon. member for Dublin had gone far to persuade the House that the object of the present Motion was to impose upon Ireland, not only the English system of Poor-laws, but also the almost incredible abuses which of late years had been grafted upon that system. He appealed to those hon. Members, who had heard the speech of the hon. member for Knaresborough, whether that, or anything like that, was the case? He contended that it was matter of right that the poor, who could not provide subsistence for themselves, should have subsistence provided for them by the State; and, such being his opinion, he was prepared to go further, and say, that it was incumbent upon the House to make a legislative provision for the poor in Ireland. The noble Lord had met the proposition of the hon. member for Knaresborough with a proposition for inquiry, which, to be effectual, he thought should be wider than the noble Lord at present seemed prepared to make it. He was decidedly of opinion, that if this Motion had been taken into consideration at an earlier period, it would have done more to quiet the minds of the people of Ireland, and to remove the disturbances which prevailed among them, than any resolution to which the House could now come. If the English Poor-laws were so objectionable as some Gentlemen represented them to be, why should they not apply to Ireland the

Scotch Poor-laws, which gave relief to the old and infirm, but refused it to the able-bodied labourer?

Mr. *Hume* was sorry to see so great a difference of opinion upon this subject in the House, and was surprised to find that hon. Members were inclined to consider the facts contained in the Poor-law Report as unworthy of attention and credence. He was himself friendly to the poor, but he should be guilty of a dereliction of his duty, if, believing, as he did, in the existence of the evils arising out of the Poor-laws in England, he should consent to the introduction of the same laws into another country which was sufficiently afflicted with evils of almost every sort at present. He concurred with the hon. member for Colchester in saying that, from the day the Corn-laws were passed, the deterioration of the peasantry of England commenced; but he could not concur with his hon. friend in asserting, that every man who wanted food ought to be allowed to help himself to it from his neighbour's food or his neighbour's house. It was the disposition of all classes, high as well as low, to indulge themselves at the expense of others. Now, nothing conduced more to the happiness of a state than to make the people trust to themselves, and depend upon there own industry. The principle which had just been laid down by his hon. friend, the member for Kirkcudbright, was decidedly opposed to this maxim, and, if followed up, would lead to the destruction of every species of property. He believed that if the Poor-laws of England were not speedily amended, they would demoralize the whole country. The present was a question with which it was the duty of Government to grapple; but he hoped that they would not grapple with it until they were in possession of full information, or at least of fuller information than any which they had at present. He suggested to the noble Lord the propriety of sending a Commission to Scotland, in order to collect the same information in the parishes of that country which had been recently collected in the parishes of England. The report presented by the General Assembly of Scotland proved, that in proportion as the English Poor-laws had been introduced into the south-western parts of that country, they had aggravated the distresses and increased the numbers of the poor. He was happy to say, that in the north of Scotland, and particularly in the county in which he was born, the principle of giving food to able-bodied labourers had never been adopted, and thus none of the evils were known there which now afflicted the south-western parts of Scotland, and reduced them to the same degradation in which many parts of England were unfortunately involved. If the Government appointed such a Commission as he had suggested, he was certain that they would collect a mass of facts which would make the House pause before it ventured to apply to Ireland the Poor-laws of England. He supported the Amendment of the noble Lord, because it would collect information; and the collection of information would, he was quite sure, convince the House of the impolicy of assenting to the original Motion.

Colonel *Conolly* said, that the proposition of the hon. member for Knaresborough was so vague and indefinite, that he did not see how any rational man could support it. He gave the hon. Member full credit for the best possible intentions to remedy the evils under which Ireland laboured; but as, in legislating on a great and important question, it was necessary to have some fundamental proposition upon which to act—and, as the proposition submitted by the hon. Member was devoid of all distinctness—however benevolent he might think the hon. Member's intentions (and nothing was further from his wish than to detract from his motives), he must vote against the Resolution. He would beg to ask, what benefit had the system of Poor-laws conferred upon England? Were they, he would ask, attended with such advantage to this great country, as to warrant the House in extending the system to Ireland, where a total want of the necessary machinery by which to work them existed? A great deal of the misery of Ireland arose from the want of a resident gentry; and how could any system of Poor-laws be worked beneficially, or with any prospect of success, without a resident gentry? Could the House, he would ask, expect to see the system conducted in Ireland with the same beneficial results as in Scotland, where, not only the spirit, but the letter of the law of Elizabeth was maintained? If he thought the Poor-laws could be introduced into Ireland with anything like similar results, he should be ready to adopt them. But, as it appeared to him that there was no evil already existing in Ireland that they were not calculated to increase—that there was no one moral good they were calculated to achieve—that, as they could not be conducive to the welfare of Ireland, but, on the contrary, as, in his opinion, they would tend to aggravate the state of demoralization in which that country was at present plunged, he was bound to oppose the Resolution of the hon. Member, and support the Amendment of the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The object of the noble Lord was simply to inquire into the state of the poor. To that he could not object; but carrying such a Resolution as that proposed by the hon. Member would, in his opinion, be a direct invasion of property, which he was bound to resist to the utmost of his power. It was necessary to disabuse the public mind of an impression which appeared to be entertained—namely, that the effect of extending a system of Poor-laws to Ireland would be to relieve England from the influx of Irish labourers, of which such complaints had been made. Hon. Members never laboured under a greater delusion than to suppose that it was the inert portion of the population, which travelled to England in search of employment. No such thing—it was the most industrious and laborious class of persons on the face of the earth that periodically arrived in England. And so far from a system of Poor-laws in Ireland checking what had been termed an invasion of this country by the Irish peasantry, they would rather have a contrary effect. In agreeing, on the present occasion, with the hon. member for Dublin—and as it was a circumstance of very rare occurrence—he could not help paying his tribute of praise to the eloquence he displayed, and of thanking him for the assistance he afforded in rescuing Ireland, from what he could not but consider one of the greatest afflictions by which it could be visited. Having expressed himself so strongly against the introduction of Poor-laws into Ireland, he felt it necessary, on his own behalf, to say, that he was most friendly to a power being given to parishes to assess themselves for the maintenance of the poor—he would not go the length of saying the destitute—for he feared that would embrace many who were able to work; but he would say, the physically destitute; and he would add, on the part of the body of the gentry of the county which he had the honour to represent, that they were most anxious to assess themselves for the relief of those whom nature had deprived of the means of helping themselves. Such a system would not engender pauperism. The Poor-laws, relieving able-bodied men, did engender pauperism—and for that reason he opposed the introduction of them into Ireland.

Mr. *Shaw* said, as there appeared an almost unanimous disposition to agree to the Amendment of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he would merely observe that he found himself placed in the peculiar situation of agreeing in the sentiments uttered by the hon. and learned member for Dublin; while, at the same time, he assented to the proposition of the noble Lord; he was satisfied that the more the matter was inquired into, the more would the House and the country be convinced of the entire inexpediency, if not the utter impossibility, of introducing Poor-laws into Ireland. The great fallacy which pervaded the arguments of the hon. member for Knaresborough (Mr. Richards), and those who supported him, was, that they assumed the introduction of Poor-laws would necessarily relieve Ireland from the poverty which it was admitted on all hands existed. Now, his (Mr. Shaw's) opinion was, that they would considerably aggravate that poverty, and only increase the evils that already afflicted that country. The only argument in favour of the introduction of Poor-laws into Ireland, which appeared to be of any force, was that of assimilating the laws on the subject in England and Ireland. Now, he (Mr. Shaw) had no objection to extending such laws as were good to Ireland; and, if assimilation was the object, let those laws which were found to be injurious in their effects in England be abolished. He believed it was of the essence of the Poor-laws to engender poverty and crime, and that they had already that effect in England—besides having, in many instances, driven the owners and cultivators of the soil to abandon their properties to the devouring appetite of pauperism. He, therefore, for one, would never consent to extend such a system to Ireland—calculated as it was, also, to wither the sources of true benevolence, and dry up the streams of real charity. If Poor-laws were established in Ireland, he was persuaded that the whole labouring population would be reduced to a state of legalized pauperism, and that scarcely a single individual could earn his bread independently. He had, however, no objection to inquiry; and as he considered that the tendency of the noble Lord's Amendment would not be to introduce such a system, but the contrary, it should have his support.

Lord *Acheson* could not overlook the fact, that England had, under her system of Poor-laws, enjoyed a long career of prosperity; still, as the question was, whether such laws should now be introduced into Ireland, he could not but have some doubts on the subject. He should wish, however, to see a modified system of Poor-laws introduced into Ireland. The parishes ought to be allowed to tax themselves, and then it would be seen how the system worked. Certainly, he wished that more information should be obtained on the subject, and therefore he supported the noble Lord; but he trusted the inquiry would end in recommending a modified system.

Lord *Sandon* only desired to say a few words from the peculiar situation of the town which he represented. That town was greatly interested in the question; and a public meeting had lately been held there on the subject. The question, it must be admitted, was doubtful, for they had the hon. and learned member for Dublin on one side, and the learned Dr. Doyle on the other. The House must not take up the opinions of the Poor-laws Commissioners, without reflection. Their inquiries were all partial. He would as soon form his opinion of the animal economy from a description of disease, as form an opinion of the Poor-laws of England from the Report of the Commissioners. They were ordered to select and inquire into the most remarkable cases, not into the general system. He admitted that the Report gave a correct view of the abuses which prevailed in the southern counties of England; but those abuses were not the general characteristics of the system. He denied that they dried up the sources of charity; for there was no country more charitable than England. But charity itself led to many abuses, and that was no argument against charity. They were not to argue from the abuses of a system to its uses. He certainly was ready to support inquiry; but he wished it to be conducted without prejudice. It was impossible, he believed, to maintain two different systems in the two countries. In order to get correct information, he would suggest, that some of the gentlemen who had been employed to inquire into the operation of the Poor-laws in England, should be employed to inquire into the state of the poor of Ireland.

Mr. *Clay* denied that this was a mere Irish question, as had been asserted—it was essentially an English question. If the produce of Ireland was allowed to enter into competition with the agricultural industry of this country, without any protection to the latter—but that, on the contrary, England was to have to support the paupers of Ireland, as well as her own—nothing but ruin would follow. He regretted to see any opposition in the House to Poor-laws in Ireland, however modified.

Mr. *Barron* was an advocate for the introduction of Poor-laws into Ireland, at the same time he would, for the present, prefer that an inquiry, such as the noble Lord's Amendment proposed, should precede any legislation on the subject, for he was sure that the more inquiry was made, the more the House and the country would be convinced of the necessity of the application of some system of Poor-laws to that country. He did not mean that system of Poor-laws which the hon. and learned member for Dublin seemed to apprehend, but a system which, adopting the principle of giving relief to the destitute, would avoid the evils of the present Poor-laws of England. He contended, that if Poor-laws were established in Ireland, the poor would not emigrate to this country, as some hon. Members seemed to apprehend; nor did he think that it would have the effect of destroying the rent of land. On the contrary, it would be a security to the landlords of Ireland. Would the House, he would ask, allow the peasantry to take forcible possession of the property, for that must be the consequence of having no provision made for them? If the House denied to the landlords the protection which a modified system of Poor-laws would afford them, it must lead to their inevitable ruin. He did hope, that in any system of Poor-laws which might be applied to Ireland, the Church would not be forgotten,—that they would remember that monstrous robbery and plunder of the poor which had been committed on the poor, in applying the property of monasteries, from which the poor had derived so much benefit in former times.

Mr. *Estcourt* would be glad of the introduction of any measure which would tend to mitigate the evils of the poor in Ireland, and which would also remove some of the evils which their poverty had entailed on this country, which were severely felt in the county in which he resided. On these grounds he was disposed to give his support to the Motion of the hon. member for Knaresborough; but when he found so many members for Ireland opposed to that Motion, which they seemed to suppose would pledge the House to the introduction of the Poor-laws of England into Ireland, he hesitated to accede to it; though he owned he did not see why many of the evils of the present system might not be avoided in the application of the principle to Ireland. He was, therefore, disposed to concur in the Amendment of the noble Lord, if it went far enough; but it appeared to him as if the object of the noble Lord was to give the "go-by" to the question. If the noble Lord would consent to add these words to his Amendment, he would support it—'and to inquire and report whether it is expedient 'to make any, and what further provision, 'by raising sums of money, by law, to 'provide for the lame, the blind, and the 'impotent, and those who are not able to 'work.' In this he used the words of the Statute of Elizabeth.

Lord *Althorp* had before stated, that he did not think it desirable to give to the commissioners the right to recommend any particular course, or to do anything more than to collect information by which Parliament might be enabled to judge for themselves. He could assure his hon. friend that it was not his intention, by his Amendment, to give the "go-by" to the question.

Mr. *Richards*, in reply, contended, that his former arguments had not been refuted. One of the most strenuous of the opponents of his Motion was the hon. and learned member for Dublin. Now, he held a paper in his hand containing a report of the proceedings of a meeting held in Dublin a few years ago on this very subject of the application of a system of Poor-laws to Ireland. At that meeting, Lord Cloncurry presided; and the meeting was addressed, amongst others, by a Mr. O'Connell (he did not know whether it was the same hon. and learned Gentleman who was now opposed to his Motion). That Mr. O'Connell declared that he was in favour of a system of Poor-laws for Ireland. He said, that the poor must be supported, either by voluntary contributions, or by the Government, and that it was the first duty of a well-regulated government to provide for the poor. That hon. Gentleman went on to say, that he would have a well-regulated system of Poor-laws for Ireland; and he thought that such a system was necessary, particularly in the then circumstances of Ireland. In the conclusion of that speech, the Mr. O'Connell whom he quoted, apologised for having detained the meeting so long, but as a convert to the opinion which he then entertained, he came to the question with all the fervour of a renegado. He did not know (supposing that it was the same Mr. O'Connell who had made that speech, and who had to-night opposed it)—he did not know which opinion he (Mr. Richards) should prefer—whether he should have the opinion of the renegado of that day from a former opinion, or the renegado of the present from that opinion. He supposed he must let the one neutralize the other, and come to the conclusion that both were worth nothing. His object was not to injure either Ireland or England, but to raise the peasantry of the former country to the level and condition of those of England. As to the Amendment, he had so much respect for the character of the noble Lord who proposed it, and so much confidence, that it was really meant to lead to a measure of relief for the poor in Ireland, that he would not press his Motion to a division, but he hoped that, in the appointment of the commission, the noble Lord would not select any political economists—those whom the hon. member for Middlesex seemed so much in love with—but that he would select men who would collect facts without any prejudice for one side or the other, and submit them without any comment.

Sir *Robert Peel* hoped that they would not proceed to legislate on this subject without the most ample information before them, which was within their reach. He would suggest to the noble Lord, that much valuable knowledge might be obtained through the foreign ministers resident in this country. They would be able to give, or procure, information respecting the laws in their countries applicable to the relief of the poor. It would be important to know what were the laws applicable to the relief of the poor in large cities, or in rural districts, and what provisions existed for the relief of sudden and extensive distress amongst that class. Foreign courts would, he was sure, be ready to afford every information on those subjects.

Original Motion negatived, and the Amendment of Lord Althorp as follows, was agreed to. Resolved,—'That an 'Humble Address be presented to his Ma'jesty, praying that he will be graciously 'pleased to give directions that a Commis'sion do issue, to inquire into the con'dition of the poorer classes of his Ma'jesty's subjects in Ireland, and into the 'various institutions at present established 'by law for their relief.'

DOVER ELECTION.] Mr. *Halcomb* rose to make a Motion respecting the use of Government influence at the late elections for Dover. He expressed his sincere hope that the circumstances which he was about to state might be satisfactorily explained. It was well known that there had been two severe elections for Dover. There could be no doubt, in his opinion, that at those elections undue influence had been resorted to for the purpose of procuring the return of the Government candidate. He did not inculpate any one, but it was manifest that some person behind the curtain had interfered most irregulary, illegally, and unconstitutionally. The hon. Member adverted to several cases in proof of his assertion; particularly that of Mr. Rigden, the clerk of the Ordnance Works. Mr. Rigden, in the first of the two recent elections, had favoured the Opposition candidates. Immediately after the election and without any cause assigned, Mr. Rigden was suspended, and a Mr. O'Shea was sent for from Ireland to fill his situation. After the second election, however, Mr. O'Shea was sent back to Ireland, and Mr. Rigden was restored to his office. He (Mr. Halcomb) had no doubt that the suspension of Mr. Rigden was made use of by his opponent, Captain Stanhope, for the purpose of deterring other persons in the service of Government from voting against the Government candidates. These circumstances ought, in his opinion, to induce the House to determine to see the correspondence on the subject. He believed it to be a fact, that the Captains of the Post Office Packets had been written to, that if they did not vote for Captain Stanhope, they should be deprived of their situations. He had not himself seen the letters in which that was said, but the Captains of those vessels had previously stated to him that they were most anxious for his success; and he would ask the House if, when they heard that those Captains afterwards voted for his opponent, they could doubt that there had been Government interference? He had good authority, likewise, for saying that Colonel Arnold, the presiding officer of the Ordnance Department at Dover, had received letters from the Ordnance, requiring him to interfere in favour of the Government candidate; and he had reason to think, that the right hon. Gentleman who had formerly been his opponent, had procured that interference on the part of the Ordnance. He would further state, that he had received a letter that morning from a person who had been formerly employed in the Government service in Dover, who said, that he and five others had been discharged, because they had given their votes in his (Mr. Halcombe's) favour; and he understood, that another letter had come from a Gentleman there, in which it was said that sixteen more were to be discharged on the same account. The hon. Gentleman then stated, that in consequence of persons in the employment of Government having refused to support him, unless he produced authority from some member of the Government for them to vote as they pleased, he had written a letter to the right hon. Secretary to the Treasury, stating the scruples of the voters, and requesting the required authority. In the answer which he received, the right hon. Gentleman stated, that he could not think it probable that the interference mentioned in his letter had taken place, or that threats of any kind had been used as coming from the Government; that no person had been authorized by the Government to interfere, and that "no person would be deprived of his situation for voting as he should think it his duty to do." The House might think that a very fair answer, and he was at first inclined to be of the same opinion; but still the voters were not satisfied, because, the word "duty" occurred in two places in the course of the letter, which they considered as an indirect way of telling them that it was their duty to vote for the Government candidate. He accordingly wrote a second time to the right hon. Gentleman, stating the new difficulty, and requesting an answer couched in language which would satisfy the voters. He would beg attention to the answer, as it was a very short one. The right hon. Gentleman merely said, that "he had received his letter, and was surprised that his former letter on the same subject had not given satisfaction, and that he had only to add—that no person would be deprived of his situation for giving such a vote as he should think it his duty to give." The right hon. Gentleman did not write that they might vote as they pleased, but that they might vote as they considered it their duty to do; and he could tell the House, though hon. Members might think that the terms were synonymous, that at

Dover there was a very perceptible distinction between them. He, therefore, wrote again to the right hon. Secretary to the Treasury, that he (Mr. Halcomb) should think it his duty to bring the matter before the House of Commons, unless he received the support at the poll of every voter in the service of the Government. As a further proof that Government had interfered against him, he might mention that a hand-bill had been distributed in Dover, which set forth "that the Committee of the right hon. Charles Poulett Thomson were authorised to state, that the right hon. Charles Grant was to offer himself as a candidate for their suffrages." That showed that all had been done which was possible to throw him out. The hon. Member then read a passage from the Journals of the House, in which it is declared a great crime for any Minister of the Crown to interfere in the election of a Member of Parliament, and concluded by moving "that a Committee be appointed to investigate the interference by or in name of the Government, particularly in the Post Office and Ordnance Departments, at the two last elections at Dover."

Colonel Perceval seconded the Motion.

Mr. *Poulett Thomson* said, he would not take up the time of the House by renewing those topics he had formerly discussed on the hustings with the hon. member for Dover. He was astonished, after the flourish of trumpets with which the hon. Member had introduced his name, that not a single fact had been brought forward to connect him with the second election at Dover. He only had stated something about having heard that a gentleman of Dover had sent the names of sixteen individuals belonging to the Ordnance, who had given their votes for the hon. Member. Now, he would ask if there was anything in that to justify the hon. Member in bringing such a charge against him? As far as regarded his connection with Dover, he could state (as he had the poll books before him) that more of those in the employment of the Government had voted in favour of his opponent than in his favour. That showed what the nature of the Government interference in Dover was. Indeed, so far from the Government candidate (as he was called) receiving support, he had considered himself as rather badly used in not receiving more support. He had that morning taken the trouble to refer to the various poll-books, when he found that, at the time he sat on the Opposition Benches, he actually received more support, and was returned by greater majorities, than when he was backed by the Government influence. But he would not pursue the subject further; he would leave it at once to the judgment of every one who had heard him, and to the decision of the House. All he would say was, that a more cock-and-bull story he never heard in his life, and he felt pretty sure the House had had quite enough of it.

Sir *James Graham* confessed, that he almost felt ashamed at having a word to say on such a question as this; but, as the character of a noble friend had been as undeservedly as unwisely attacked, he was compelled to say a word or two in justification of him. The noble Duke alluded to had, in every transaction since he came into office, acted with those under him in the most fair, manly, and straightforward manner; and he defied any one to bring an instance where he had turned the power of office to a party purpose. In no instance had he used his authority in an unworthy manner; but even if he had done so—if there had been any malversation of his power, was this the proper place in which to get redress? Had not the hon. Member access to the Courts of Law, in the practice of which he could boast so much experience—where he was accustomed to argue cases with the same ability which distinguished him in that House? The hon. Member, with his legal acquirements, must know, that any such offence as he had been attempting to prove was, under the statute of Anne, visited with special penalties, and that the Postmaster-general, if convicted, would be rendered incapable of ever holding office again. But the noble Duke, though utterly regardless of any attempt to injure his character—well knowing how signally that attempt would fail—was still anxious to clear himself in the eyes of that House, and showing to it that he had in no wise departed from that respect which was ever due to it—that he had not forgotten what was due to his own high station, or violated the trust reposed in him by his office. As an instance, he would just mention that the Post-master at Cardigan having unduly interfered, by the influence of his official situation, in the election at that town, his Grace, on being satisfied of the fact, instantly and for ever dismissed him from his Majesty's service. Further he must state, that previous to the last election, his Grace had forwarded a circular to all the Post-masters in the kingdom, pointing out the penalties they would be subject to by any attempt in their official character to promote the success of the different candidates. But lest, as had luckily been foreseen, any thing might hereafter arise, which, by the malevolence of some, or from the disappointment of others, might be turned into a means of attack upon the Government, a letter, which he should read, had been forwarded in November last by Sir Francis Freeling, to Mr. Hart, the agent for the Dover packets, warning him that any interference whatever by him or those under him with the fullest freedom of election, "would not fail to be viewed and treated in the most serious manner, and that he must not fail to take an early opportunity of acquainting all under him with the notice then sent." [Sir James here read the letter, and also one from Mr. Hart, stating "that the captains of all the vessels had at the time of the election allowed those under them who had votes to remain on shore, and had not by word or deed influenced their votes, and, indeed, knew not, till all was over, which party they had supported."] The hon. Member opposite had appealed to the House, and he would follow the hon. Member's example. He would ask them whether they could not form a correct idea of the whole of the hon. Member's charges from that which he had just refuted, and which he believed might be considered as the touchstone of the whole. He thought the House, however, had had too much of the subject already, and he should not call down expressions of impatience by pursuing it. The House would not condescend to interfere in what were, in fact, only party squabbles—disputes between Tory and Radical—between blue and Yellow, or whatever colour might be assumed—they would no longer bear with a subject which had such infinite varieties, that no one could tell what it really was, or to what good end it really tended. One principle the Government had never departed from. They never wished, and never sought to turn their official influence to the support of their own power as a Ministry, but they certainly did expect that it should not, on any occasion, be unduly exercised against them.

Motion Negatived.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, May 3, 1833.

MINUTES.] Petitions presented. By the Archbishop of YORK, the Bishops of LINCOLN and BANGOR, by Earls HOWE and RODEN, by Lord ROLLE, and a NOBLE LORD, from a Number of Places,—for a Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By the Dukes of SUSSEX, DEVONSHIRE, and NORFOLK, by the Archbishop of YORK, the Marquess of BATH, by Earls RODEN, MORLEY, ROSEBERY, and GOSFORD, and by Lords WESTERN, SUFFIELD, DACRE, POLTIMORE, and ELLENBOROUGH, from a great Number of Places,—against Slavery.—By the Duke of DEVONSHIRE, from Waterford, against granting to any Private Companies, or Associations, any Exclusive Privileges and Immunities destructive of Existing Interests; and from the Corporation of the same Place, for a Protection of their Rights of Presentation to Ecclesiastical Preferment: also from the Members of the Established Church of Waterford, against the proposed Measure of Church Reform for Ireland.—By the Earl of RODEN, from the Provincial Synod of Fife, for granting to the Irish the Means of Education in their own Language.—By the Duke of RICHMOND, from Burwash, for a Repeal of the Malt Duty.—By Lord BYRON, from Exhall, for a more Impartial and Equal Assessment for the Relief of the Poor throughout the Country.

OCCUPATION OF ALGIERS.] The Earl of *Aberdeen* rose, in pursuance of a notice he had given to their Lordships in the previous week, to bring forward a Motion in reference to a matter of great public importance, but which he should not have brought forward at the present moment had it not been connected with considerations of a personal nature. Their Lordships would probably recollect that when, in the course of last summer, the subject of Algiers was incidentally mentioned, a declaration was made by the noble Duke behind him, and by himself, that the French government had entered into engagements with respect to Algiers which they had not fulfilled. Since that declaration was made, the subject had been alluded to elsewhere by high authorities, and in terms directly leading to an opposite conclusion. Seeing this, he had been naturally desirous to bring the subject again before their Lordships, and had expressed his wish and intention to do so to the noble Earl opposite, before the Easter holidays. But as the communication he then had with the noble Earl gave him to understand that negotiations were at the time going on between the two governments which might be injured by a public discussion, he consented to postpone mentioning the matter. Shortly afterwards the declaration to which he had alluded, was repeated, and he again expressed his anxiety upon the subject to the noble Earl, who did not then think it proper to interpose any further obstacle to his bringing the matter under their Lordships' notice. Of course their Lordships would anticipate, that it was his first desire to repeat, without a tittle or shade of variation, the accusation which he made, and which had been impugned, namely that the French government had entered into engagements with respect to the occupation of Algiers which had not been fulfilled. He did not pretend to say, that there existed any convention, or any express stipulation, for the evacuation of Algiers by the French forces; far from it; but he did assert that important engagements were entered into, by means of declarations on the part of the French government, by which all the powers interested in the commerce of the Mediterranean, and the territorial arrangements then established in that part of the world, had their apprehensions allayed, and by those declarations were induced to make no objections to the occupation. As he understood it was not the intention of the noble Earl to object to the production of the papers, he should be relieved from the necessity of detaining their Lordships, by entering, upon the present occasion, into the nature of those engagements. He should be perfectly satisfied when the papers were laid before the House to leave their interpretation to the plain sense of any man of common integrity. Still less was it his intention to detain their Lordships with arguments to enforce a motion which was not to be opposed; neither had he any wish to excite angry discussion upon topics not regularly before the House. At the same time he could not help reminding their Lordships of the importance of the situation of Algiers at the present moment, connected as it was by the rights of sovereignty with the Porte, which might naturally induce the wish to take a view of that part of the question, and to inquire what were the present state and future prospects of the Turkish empire, in consequence of the policy which had been pursued towards it. And if he abstained from entering into that most important question now, he did so in the hope that at no distant day it would be regularly brought before their Lordships as proper to engage their gravest and most mature deliberation. He must also say of the policy of the noble Earl generally, that in much of the relations of this country with foreign states, he appeared to be acting upon views the most mistaken, and which, he feared, would prove most calamitous, and most fatal to the interests and honour of this country. Yet, notwithstanding that he dissented so widely from the general line of policy which the noble Earl had pursued, he had no reason, upon this immediate question, to suppose that the noble Earl's views were different from his own, or that his mind was not fully impressed with its importance. If any of their Lordships present had any naval experience of that part of the world, he would confidently appeal to them as to the importance of holding Algiers to any naval power. But with any and all their Lordships he was sure it would be enough for him to refer to the opinions so repeatedly and emphatically declared by a Nelson, a Collingwood, and an Exmouth. If not they had only to look at the position of the country in the maps, where they would see the advantage that must be held by any power possessing a line of five or six hundred miles of coast at the entrance of the Mediterranean, and almost within sight of the Spanish territory: and above all when such an advantage was in possession of such a power as France. It was impossible that a state of things could exist, in which the French obtained so great a superiority, without materially influencing the commercial relations of other countries. He could not avoid seeing in the conduct of the present French government a desire of carrying into effect one of the designs of Buonaparte, that of making the Mediterranean as he described it, a French lake. He trusted that this disposition would be watched by the English Government; and so far was he from desiring to embarrass the noble Earl under the present posture of affairs, that nothing would give him greater pleasure than to find that so humble an individual as himself could lend the noble Earl any assistance or support in upholding the honour and the interest of the country. The noble Earl concluded by moving, "That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, praying that he will be graciously pleased to direct to be laid before this House, copies or extracts of correspondence between his Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and his Majesty's ambassador at Paris, in the year 1830, relative to the French expedition to Algiers. Also, copies of official despatches addressed by the French government to the French ambassador in London, explaining the objects of the expedition, dated in the months of March and May, 1830, and delivered by him to his Majesty's Government. Also, copies or extracts of a despatch from his Majesty's Minister at Paris, communicating the intention of his Majesty the King of the French to fulfil all the engagements of the preceding government relative to Algiers."

Earl *Grey* said, that not intending to offer any opposition to the Motion, he should abstain from any discussion of the very important subject as he admitted it to be, to which the Motion referred. For he did not think it expedient, nor did he think their Lordships would deem it so, to enter into a discussion upon subjects of such a nature, respecting which further communications were still expected from the French government. He thought that in a question affecting not only the interests of France and England, but also those of other European Powers to which the noble Earl had alluded, nothing but inconvenience and mischief could result from forcing a premature discussion. What were the circumstances under which they stood with regard to the question? In the Chambers of France there was a party pressing the government upon the subject, and asserting that the honour and interests of France were involved in maintaining possession of Algiers. And if Ministers here were to be pressed in the same way, their Lordships must see, that the embarrassments arising out of excited national feelings, would render it most difficult, if not altogether impossible, for the two governments to come to a satisfactory arrangement. He did not mean to attribute to the noble Earl the least desire to produce that effect, but when he called for such information at such a time the course he took created the danger of producing it. At the same time he begged to express his entire conviction that the Motion of the noble Earl could not have been urged in a more temperate and judicious manner. He should content himself, therefore, with saying, that with regard to the two first descriptions of papers he had no objection to their production whatever. He had certainly hoped, that the Motion altogether might have been deferred for some time longer, but it having been made he had come to the conclusion that no public inconvenience would result from granting the papers, or at least none to be put in comparison with what might be expected to arise from an adverse discussion of the subject. He hoped, therefore, that the House would give its consent to the Motion. The noble Earl had the goodness to communicate to him what papers would be necessary to his object, and he was content that they should be produced, reserving to himself the discretion of making any additions which he might deem necessary to the further elucidation of the matters to which they referred. To produce the two first sets of papers demanded, he repeated he had no objection. The third was of a different character from the rest, and upon the propriety of acquiescing in the production of that document he had strong doubts—perhaps more than doubts, for he believed it would be injurious. In the first place he did not know of the existence of any paper in the Foreign Office coming within the description of the Motion of the noble Earl. There was undoubtedly a despatch from the noble Lord opposite (Lord Stewart de Rothsay) bearing the date of the 16th of August, 1830, communicating an account of a conversation which took place between him and the King of the French. Now, certainly he had no intention to question the propriety of that communication, for it was clearly not only correct, but the first duty of the noble Lord to communicate to his government the nature and particulars of such a conversation. But he would state the difficulty which appeared to him in producing the document through which that communication was made. The private conversation held by the noble Lord with the King of the French, took place on the 18th of August; a period at which the new government had not been recognised by his Majesty, and when, consequently, it could hold no official communication with his Majesty's Ambassador at Paris. It was, therefore, a matter of doubt with him whether such a communication could be deemed to partake of an official character. But, besides this objection, he desired to submit it to their Lordships' consideration, whether in any case such conversation as this could be taken by one government as the act of another? In the first place it was not a communication of a conversation held with a responsible minister in the presence of the king, and for which the minister might be responsible; it was a private conversation with the illustrious person himself. He did not mean to impugn the step taken by the noble Lord; he had already said, that it was his duty to communicate the information to his government, and he had no reason to doubt that the communication was strictly and accurately correct. But he knew, as their Lordships well knew, that all verbal communications of this kind incurred the risk of misinterpretation, and of doubts, which could only be cleared up by subsequent explanations. In the case of such matters being discussed with responsible Ministers, the assurances given were deliberately considered, on account of their responsibility, records were kept, explanations might be demanded, and misunderstandings were thereby avoided. But when the discussion was held with the Sovereign, and that, perhaps, showed the general inconvenience of such conversations between Sovereigns and Foreign Ministers, it was impossible that any Minister could be held responsible. These were his reasons for doubting the propriety of producing the third paper, and he trusted they would induce the noble Earl to consent to withdraw that part of his Motion. There was another document which the noble Earl had expressed a wish to have, but which, he thought, should not be produced. It was, perhaps, not of much importance in itself, but much more importance might be attached to it than it deserved if made public. In that view he thought it not proper to produce the paper, as it might prove injurious to the settlements of pending negotiations. Having now stated the course he meant to pursue with regard to the Motion, he would only add, that it was impossible for him to go into any discussion upon the subject whatever. He admitted its great importance, but should express no opinion whatever upon the documents, leaving them to the House for its consideration and judgment. With regard to the general subject of the position of the Turkish empire, he could assure the noble Earl, that his Majesty's Ministers were as sensibly alive as he could be to all the interests, British and European, which that question involved; and that they would endeavour to do their duty to the best of their power in preserving those interests from injury. He certainly regretted, that the noble Earl considered it a part of his duty to make some severe animadversions upon the general policy of his Majesty's Government. But, at present, he should only declare, that he and his colleagues in the course they had pursued, and should continue to pursue, were influenced by a sincere desire to maintain the general peace of the world, and a sincere desire to uphold the honour and the interests of the country. To that course he should adhere, and when the proper time arrived he should be prepared to explain the principles, and to support and vindicate the measures which the Government had adopted.

The Earl of *Aberdeen* said, he was not disposed to press for the production of the two documents to which the noble Earl objected. With respect to the first, the verbal communication of the king of the French with the English Ambassador, he thought the reasons assigned for the non-production of this document by the noble Earl were sufficiently satisfactory. As regarded the second paper, it did not appear to him that the reasons against producing it were equally satisfactory. The only object he proposed to himself in moving for these papers was, to show that the present government of France considered itself in the same situation, and bound by the same engagements, as the late government of that country. That such was considered to be the state of things at the time was clear from the speech of his present Majesty on opening the Parliament. His Majesty, in his speech, declared, that he had received the most authentic declarations that the king of the French would recognize all the engagements of the preceding French government. It was on this ground that his Majesty, the king of the French, was instantly recognized. His own hostility to the noble Earl and his Government was at times represented as passing the bounds of moderation. He might occasionally have been led into some warmth of language upon subjects in which he considered the honour and interests of the country to be deeply involved, but not greater than the occasion justified. From the first day of the Session up to the present time he had not said one word on the foreign policy of the country, or on any one of those subjects which it was natural to suppose must have occupied his attention day and night. After what had fallen from the noble Earl he could not for a moment doubt, that the relations of this country with foreign governments were such as he represented them. He trusted that, at no distant period, an opportunity would be afforded to their Lordships of entering fully into this most important subject

Motion agreed to, except the last paragraph, which was withdrawn.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, May 3, 1833.

Minutes.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of Lord Howick, an Account of all Offices Abolished in the Colonies, or of which the Emoluments have been reduced between November 22nd, 1830, and April 3rd, 1833, and of other means taken to reduce the Expenditure incurred by the said Colonies.

Bills. Read a first time:—Juries (Ireland); Privy Council.

Petitions presented. By Mr. Hodges, from Gondhurst, for the Repeal or Amendment of the Sale of Beer Act.—By Viscount Castlereagh, Sir Andrew Agnew, General O'Neal, Colonel Gore Langton, Major Handley, Lord Mandeville, Sir William Guise, Lord Robert Manners, Sir S. R. Glynne, and Mr. Byng, Mr. G. Sinclair, Mr. John Smith, Mr. Grote, Mr. Gillon, Mr. M'Leod, Mr. Hawes, and Mr. Roebuck, from a Number of Places,—for the Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By General O'Neil, Sir George Staunton, Sir Charles Coote, Sir William Guise, Sir J. Hanmer, Lord Robert Manners, and by Mr. Hawes, Mr. Fazakerley, Mr. J. P. Chichester, Mr. Atherley, Mr. John Smith, Mr. M'Leod, Mr. Byng, Mr. Hill, Mr. W. Evans, Mr. F. North, Mr. Slaney, Mr. Gillon, Mr. Kemyss Tynte, Mr. Greene, Mr. C. Russell, Mr. Poulter, and by Lord Cavendish, from a great many Places,—for the Abolition of Slavery.—By Mr. Gillon, from Lanark, and other Places, for Inquiry into the prevailing Distress: also from the Hand-loom Weavers of Airdrie, and Falkirk, and by Mr. Bolling, from those of Bolton, for Inquiry and Relief.—By Mr. Gillon, from the Political Union of Kilmarnock; and by Mr. Hill, from Kingston-upon-Hull,—for a Repeal of the Septennial Act.—By Mr. Gillon, from Glasgow, Hamilton, and other Places, for severing the Connexion between Church and State.—By Mr. Gillon, from Kirkintilloch; by Mr. Sinclair, from Dyce, and other Places; and by Mr. M'Leod, from Kincardine and Dollar,—for altering the present System of Church Patronage in Scotland.—By Mr. Roebuck, from Bristol; and by Mr. Clay, from St. Mary, Whitechapel,—for Amending the Law relating to Imprisonment for Debt.—By General Palmer, Mr. Kemyss Tynte, Lord John Russell, and Mr. Harland, from several Places,—against the Assessed Taxes.—By Colonel Gore Langton, Mr. Byng, Mr. Kemyss Tynte, Mr. Estcourt, Sir W. Guise, and Mr. Clay, from several Places,—for the Repeal or Amendment of the Sale of Beer Act.—By Mr. Clay, from the Inn and Tavern Keepers of the Metropolis, for Amending the Laws for granting Music Licenses.—By Mr. M'Leod, from Kincardine, for Permission to Import Foreign Sugar to be Refined for Exportation.—By Mr. Hill, from Hull, for Vote by Ballot; and from the Guardian Society, Hull, for the Repeal of the Duty on Stamped Receipts.—By Sir S. R. Glynne, from Flint, for Poor Laws to Ireland.—By Mr. Hawes, from the Licensed Victuallers of Surrey, for Exemptions from Taxes now charged on their Premises.—By Mr. Atherley, from Southampton; and Mr. Byng, from Hanwell,—in favour of the Factories Regulation Bill.—By an Hon. Member, from Penzance, for Removing the Civil Disabilities of the Jews.

Corporation of Leicester.] Mr. *Halford* held in his hand a Petition from the Mayor, Bailiffs, and Burgesses of the Borough of Leicester signed by the Mayor on behalf of that body, and sealed with their common seal. This petition was occasioned by one which had been presented a few days back by the hon. member for Leicester (Mr. Evans), containing some reflections injurious to the public character and integrity of that body. The petitioners stated, that they had become acquainted with the real contents of the petition from seeing it advertised in *The Leicester Chronicle* newspaper, and also distributed and posted in hand-bills about the town, but that it contained scandalous misrepresentations, and imputed misconduct to the Corporation, both as to the administration of justice and the distribution of charitable funds as trustees for various charitable purposes; that they felt themselves so aggrieved by those false and scandalous misrepresentations, and that they should be so exposed to public odium and disgrace, that they felt resolved to adopt the only means they had — namely, that of moving in his Majesty's Court of King's Bench for a criminal information against the parties concerned in the said scandalous libel; and that as a necessary qualification for moving for such, they were obliged to deny on oath all and every charge of mismanagement and corruption which the said petition imputed to them, and in compliance with such rules, affidavits from the Bar had been filed, in which each and every charge contained in the said petition was denied. He begged leave to move, that the petition be referred to the Corporation Committee.

Mr. *William Evans*, in reference to the petition which he had the honour to present, and which was now said to contain gross and scandalous libels, said, it was signed by 5,800 individuals, including a great portion of the most respectable inhabitants of the town of Leicester, who, he believed, were utterly incapable of getting up such a petition, unless they knew that there were abuses in the Corporation, and that they felt the grievances of which they complained. A part of the allegations in the petition he knew to be true, and his opinion was, that, substantially, they were all true. The hon. Member (Mr. Halford) could not deny that the Corporation made 2,000 freemen at nearly one time; and, he would ask, was not that an abuse? Was that a false and gross libel? It was true that all of those 2,000 did not take up their freedom, but many of them did. He believed, that the inhabitants of Leicester had very great cause of complaint, on account of various instances of misconduct in the Corporation, and that nothing would gratify the inhabitants more than a full, fair, and complete investigation into the conduct of that body.

Mr. *Roebuck* said, that the present petitioners expressed an anxious wish, as a means of refuting the allegations of the former petition, that a full and strict investigation might be made into their proceedings, and yet they were about to proceed by criminal information. Why, if they wished for an impartial inquiry, did they not proceed so as to allow the parties an opportunity, if they could, of justifying themselves? Great stress was laid on the affidavits of the Corporation functionaries; they might consider, from long habit, that their conduct was correct; but so long as they proceeded in the way they had done, he should look with great suspicion not only on their statements, but upon their affidavits.

Mr. *Halford*, in explanation, said, that they were only anxious to vindicate themselves, and, he believed, the only cause of complaint that existed against them was, that they were staunch friends to the Constitution in Church and State.

The Petition to be referred to the Committee on Corporations.

CHURCH ESTABLISHMENT (IRELAND).] Mr. *Gillon* presented several Petitions, all of them very numerously signed, from most respectable bodies of persons in Scotland, for the general abolition of the Church Establishment of Ireland. They were from the Members of the Political Union of the Borough of Kilmarnock; from the Inhabitants of Hamilton; from the Chairman and Members of the Glasgow Political Union; from the Inhabitants of Carron, signed by 1,200 persons; and from the Inhabitants of the City of Glasgow, signed by 16,000 of the Inhabitants of that place. The hon. Member stated, they had all the same object, though their phraseology was different, and they considered that the alliance between the Church and State was unscriptural, and injurious to the Church, and prayed the House to take some means, as speedily as possible, to redress the evils complained of. In his opinion, the Coercive Bill they had lately passed was a Bill to keep up that Establishment. It was passed to keep up that Establishment in defiance of public opinion. The prayer of the petition he considered most reasonable. The principle of it was, that all Christians should be allowed to worship God as they pleased, and that they should not have their feelings affronted by being compelled to support the doctrines which other men embraced, and of which they disapproved. The petitioners were strengthened in their support of this sacred principle by remembering that the blood of their martyred fathers had been shed in that same cause. He was satisfied, that no means would ever be devised to tranquillize Ireland till the Church Establishment there was completely extinguished. Great complaints had of late been made of the distress of the people, and he had willingly lent his aid to reduce taxation. He would on all occasions do that; but he would never give his vote for the substitution of any other tax for those he might vote to abolish, till the whole property of the Church of Ireland had been appropriated to the uses of the State. The petitioners considered that property to belong to the State; so did he; and he would never vote for the imposition of any new tax, till the whole of it was appropriated to relieve the public burthens.

Mr. *Sinclair* trusted, that the last petition which had been presented would not be considered as speaking the sense of all the inhabitants from whence that petition came. The people of Scotland were sensible that they had derived many blessings from their own Establishment. They were also sensible, that the Established Church had rendered many important services to the general cause of Christianity; and though they desired all reasonable reforms, the abolition contemplated by these petitions they would consider the downfall of the establishment of the country, which would be one of the greatest misfortunes that could befall the United Kingdom.

Petition laid upon the Table.

POOR LAWS (IRELAND).] Mr. *William Roche:* Sir, having recently received from a most respectable portion of my constituents, in the city of Limerick, the Petition which I hold in my hands relating to the interesting and important subject of last night's debate, namely, the expediency of devising a system of Poor-laws for Ireland suitable to the necessities and circumstances of that country; I had intended presenting it that evening, and adverting to the subject matter of it; but from the anxiety of the House to close the debate after the very satisfactory proposition of the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, I could not obtain an opportunity. My feelings incline me, as far as may be practicable, to advocate that system of protection for the poor which would comprehend employment for those anxious and able to earn their bread, when, notwithstanding their best individual exertions, they are unable to obtain employment, or in other words, when want of employment is no fault of their own; because I think, Sir, that without some plan or provision to this effect, we do imperfectly, and but by halves, approach the justice, policy, or humanity of the case. Sir, that a man who has not property already acquired should, so long as he is able, earn his own bread, is a maxim equally required and supported by religious morals, and political principles, but to enable him to do so, when he is well-disposed, is I think, equally an obligation on the other classes of society. The poor man, Sir, who is anxious to support himself and family honestly and independently, but who, in despite of his best unaided exertions, cannot accomplish it from want of employment, is not very far from being, even in the eye of humanity alone, an equal object of public protection and sympathy with those physically incapacitated; and were we to be actuated solely by the maxims of civil policy, perhaps more so; because such a man, if neglected, is susceptible of the worst impressions towards society by the discontent his situation is so likely to generate, disposing him, probably, to obtain by force or fraud what is refused to his honest endeavours. Or if, on the other hand, he should bear up peacefully and patiently against his distress, destitution and disease will, ere long, place him and his family in the indisputable list of the impotent. Sir, I make these observations only to show, that though, undoubtedly, the subject is difficult of arrangement, it is nevertheless entitled to our best consideration; for, as was properly observed during the debate, it is not because abuses may have crept into the Poor-laws in this country that we should reject or lose sight of their preponderating advantages, particularly as most of those abuses are quite susceptible of being remedied. In Ireland, Sir, I often had occasion to see and commiserate the poor labourer leaving his humble dwelling morning after morning with his spade, shovel, or some such instrument of labour in his hand in search of a day's work, but returning evening after evening disappointed, disconsolate also from his inability to purchase even one meal for his family—then, pawning article after article of his scanty furniture, till, when no more remained, he was compelled to beg, his misery, even then, often mocked by being told he was but an idle lazy fellow who could get work if he wished. Sir, such a distressing case—and such cases abound in Ireland—surely demands, both from humanity and policy, some attention and redress. But, Sir, as the remedy, however desirable, involves so many serious considerations and consequences, it is no doubt proper to proceed with circumspection, and the noble Lord's proposition appears therefore advisable. Provision for the poor would have the advantage, too, Sir, of compelling the absentee to repair some part, at least, of the evils his apathy and neglect create; and the enormous property of the Church Establishment in Ireland could well spare to contribute effectually to this end. But, Sir, to return to the petition; I have said it came from a most respectable portion of my constituents. It is, in fact, exclusively signed by the wealthier classes, which circumstances, as they are to be the payers, not the receivers, gives it greater authority, for when people recommend an impost on themselves, its urgency must indeed be very manifest. That circumstance also renders it highly creditable to their feelings and character. The prayer of the petition only extends to provision for the aged and infirm, unwilling, at least as a commencement, to proceed further. It, therefore, Sir, is I think, free from any possible objection, as no one disputes the necessity of a provision for the poor to that extent. With regard to myself, Sir, I have no partiality for Poor-laws to a greater extent, provided employment can be obtained in any other more eligible way, whether by allocations of land or otherwise; but I fear that, until society be roused by the *argumentum ad Crumenam* it will not take up the matter with the attention, promptitude, and efficiency it deserves.

I now, Sir, beg leave to lay the Petition on the Table.

STAMP DUTIES — UNEQUAL TAXATION.] Lord Althorp moved the Order of the Day for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of Supply.

Upon the Order of the Day being read on the question that the Speaker leave the Chair.

Mr. *Cobbett* rose to make a complaint, on the part of the labouring and working classes of England and Ireland, and Scotland too, of great partiality in Taxation. He complained, upon their part, that heavy Stamp-duties and Auction-duties were laid upon them, while the rich part of his Majesty's subjects escaped the far greater of those duties. This was what he had to show to the House; but before he proceeded with his statement, he must make one or two observations upon certain reproaches that had been cast upon him at different times for having an intention, and being desirous to set the poor against the rich. Why, if a Member of Parliament must not complain that the poor were ill-treated by the rich—if he must never put forward the claims of the poor, in opposition to those of the rich, without incurring this charge—then that House must consist of the Representatives of the rich, and not of the Representatives of the poor. However, disregarding that imputation—disregarding the imputation of making statements as the hon. member for Hull had accused him of doing—(his learning and good manners had prevented him from doing so in English), for the purpose of misleading the vulgar, he would proceed with his statement, and he, in general, complained, that of eight millions of taxation, raised upon the people of this kingdom, including the cost of the collection, a very small portion indeed was paid by those who were best able to pay, and he was afraid it would appear (though he was by no means anxious that it should), that this had been done by premeditation and design, and that it could not have been done otherwise. As he had done on a former occasion when he brought forward this matter, he should submit what he had to offer to the House in the shape of Resolutions, which Resolutions, in divers successive propositions, would contain a statement of facts drawn from the Acts of Parliament themselves, and not based on any loose conjecture. What he had to state was quite undeniable—it was not to be referred to the errors of assessors, commissioners, and so forth, as the hon. Gentleman had done the other night, counting up windows and doors. Unless it could be proved that the Acts of Parliament did not exist, he could not be answered. The first Resolution was rather a prelude to the rest—it was a preamble, containing a statement which he thought would not be questioned. It was this:—

"Resolved—That an impost, which, according to the letter of the law imposing it, is made to press with greater weight on one man, or on one class of men, than on other men, or on another class of men, is, properly speaking, not a tax, but a confiscation, and the law imposing it is, if properly defined, a penal law, such as were the laws imposing double taxes on the Catholics of England, and on the Quakers of the United States of America; and that when one part of the community is compelled to pay a tax, from which another part of the same community is wholly exempted, there is a clear and undeniable confiscation; and that, if such confiscation be inflicted without crime committed by, and proved upon, the party on whom it is inflicted, such confiscation is an act of tyranny."

"This was a Resolution to which the Committee could not object. If the noble Lord said, that the taxation was not an imposition on one class from which another was exempt, then let him not complain of a graduated Property-tax, of which it had been so much the fashion to talk. Dr. Johnson had written a celebrated pamphlet called "Taxation no Tyranny;" and it was no tyranny if fairly imposed. Speaking of different districts, he had taken very good care to say, "if each part of the kingdom pays only in due proportion." The tax of which he was speaking, was no tyranny if the nobility and gentry paid in due proportion to those in the middle ranks of life; but if he showed, that those in the middle and lower ranks of life paid ten, forty, a hundred, a thousand fold more than the rich, was not that taxation a tyranny? Would Dr. Johnson have said that that taxation was not tyranny? The noble Lord, when he first came into office, had proposed a tax upon the funds, and on the transfer of stock. What frightened him out of that he (Mr. Cobbett) did not know; but that would not have been the taxation of which he was speaking. The noble Lord was certainly frightened out of that taxation, for property in the funds was not mere personal property—it was something more—it was assured by law—it was a solemn interest a fixed thing as much as freehold. But the taxes of which he spoke were of a different nature. He now came to another branch of his argument—he meant the manner in which the rich and great had guarded themselves in the enactment of the duty on stamps, and he intended to propose the following resolution:—

"By the Acts of Parliament passed on the 11th of July, 1815, being chapter 184 of the fifty-fifth of George 3rd. and by the Act passed on the 5th of August, 1822, being chapter 117 of the third of George 4th imposing certain duties on stamps, amounting annually, in the aggregate, to upwards of seven millions a-year, the utmost care has been taken to exempt the nobility and great landed proprietors from bearing any but a very small share of the burthen; and further to make the tax heavier and heavier, in proportion to the smallness of the amount of property on which it is levied; so that each tax goes on, pressing heavier and heavier, from the very rich down to the very poor, as will clearly appear by a reference to the letter of the said Acts."

These were his words, as well now as on former occasions; and if these words should prove to be true, then he trusted the House would be prepared (notwithsanding the vote of Tuesday last) to go along with him in making the taxes fall equally on all the people of these realms. He now came to the legacies, and the effect which the stamp duties had upon them. This was the Resolution he proposed on that subject:—

"By the first of the said Acts, various duties on legacies, and on property coming by intestate succession, are imposed applicable to different degrees of relationship between the legatees and the successors and the deceased, beginning at one per cent, and going on to ten per cent; but that from these duties all freehold property is wholly exempt, and, therefore, from the tax, which is, on an average, about three per cent, on all other property in the kingdom left by will, or coming by intestate succession, the estates of the nobility and landed gentry, (including the advowsons and lay-tithes) are exempted, while the father, the mother, the child, of the fundholder, the tradesman, the farmer, or other person bequeathing personal property, has one per cent to pay on the amount of the legacy or intestate succession, while a brother who has had 1,000*l.* left him by a brother, has 30*l.* to pay on this duty, and while a distant relation of the deceased has, on a legacy of the same amount, to pay 100*l.*"

Now, unless it was asserted from the other side, and meant to contradict these facts—unless they were prepared to say that the Act of Parliament itself was untrue, where, he would ask, was the answer of the noble Lord, or the right hon. Gentleman near the noble Lord, to be found? He could hardly believe—he could hardly bring himself to believe, that if the legislators by whom these Acts were passed knew the hundredth, nay, the thousandth part of the hardship and injury they would inflict on the middling and lower classes, they would have ventured to pass them into a law. In fact there were many cases in which the whole of a legacy was absorbed by the duty, the fees of the lawyer, and other charges; so that, to the person to whom the legacy was bequeathed, it was of no benefit. One person wrote to him from the country, stating that he had been bequeathed a legacy of 50*l.* a-year, for himself, his wife, and children, but that he had to pay, in the first year 132*l.*, a sum far exceeding the produce of two years of the legacy. He was obliged to borrow money to meet this enormous demand; and, in fact, if the party had not, there would have been a loss instead of a gain upon the bequest. Could it ever have been intended that this should be the law of the land? Either those who enacted these laws, knew what their effects would be, or they did not. If they did not know what those effects would be, it was time that they should be made acquainted with them; but if they did know what those effects would be, then it was time that the people should be made acquainted with the fact that they did. His next Resolution was on the probates on wills and letters of administration. It was this—

"That, in regard to the probates of wills and letters of administration, if the deceased leave property above the value of 20*l.*, his successors have to pay a stamp duty of 10*s.*; that is to say, at the rate of 2*l.* per cent on the value of the property; but that, if the party dying leave by will any sum from 30,000*l.* to 500,000*l.* the duty is only 1*l.* 10*s.* per cent; and that, in this case again, all freehold property is exempted."

He would ask the House whether this was not monstrous? Was it not, in the first place, an almost total exemption of the whole of the great estates of the country from the operation of this tax. Well, they were safe enough; they could not be touched. But then there was generally some personal property left, as the large estates, which could not be so easily protected. It, of course, must pay; but was it enacted that it should pay in a fair proportion with that of the poor man? Oh, no! How would hon. Members justify themselves in taking 45*l.* out of 1,000*l.* left to the orphan or widow (for even the poor widow was not exempted from the operation of this tax), while, from the property left by a rich bishop, amounting to some 300,000*l.*, it took only one-half that sum? How would hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite justify this? It had been stated, that a right hon. Baronet (Sir Robert Peel), who usually sat near him (Mr. Cobbett), had paid the largest legacy duty ever paid in England—that he had paid 15,000*l.* But if that duty were paid, as he understood it was, on 1,000,000*l.* of money, the duty, at the rate paid by the poor man, ought to have amounted to 30,000*l.* And yet the people were called to look upon this as a noble and generous act on the part of the right hon. Baronet. But should the 1,000,000*l.* or the 300,000*l.* only pay half the poor man's proportion? Let those who appeared to understand the subject so well, and who had dared him to the combat, tell him upon what ground it was, that the 300,000*l.* should pay only half of the proportion paid by the single 1,000*l.*, why should the latter pay double the proportion of the former? If he possessed one acre of land and his neighbour 1,000 acres, and if his neighbour paid 1,000 times as much duty on that land as he did for his one acre, the tax would be equal; but if the holder of the 1,000 acres paid any more than that proportion, it would be so far a confiscation of his estate. These were the principles of taxation which he had uniformly advocated, and which he held to be just. He hoped hon. Gentlemen would attend to the order in which he had made his objections, and answer them in the same order. No general answer would satisfy him, and he was sure it would not satisfy the country. The noble Lord opposite had told him on a former night, when he (Mr. Cobbett) was a little angry, and perhaps his language a little stronger than usual, "that if the nobility and great landed proprietors of the country were to be taxed in the same proportion with persons in more humble classes of life, the whole property of the country would pass away in the course of 100 years." To be sure it would, and in far less time. By a calculation made by Baron Mazeres, the most able calculator of his time, it appeared that in 16½ years the taxes would take away all the property of the country. This was literally the fact with many of the middling and some humble classes of society; they had lost their property, and were obliged to work for their bread. The poor were obliged to toil under great privations. They lived less happy lives; while those immediately above them were rendered less wealthy by this unjust, intolerant, and iniquitous tax. But the noble Lord must have mistaken him. He (Mr. Cobbett) never proposed to take away the landed estates of lords or gentlemen; he should be sorry to see any tax introduced which would have that effect. He wished not to wrong any one, but he might be allowed to ask why the rich landlord should not pay in due proportion with the poor? He wished, too, the estates of the middling classes should not be taken from them, by calling on them to pay an undue proportion of taxation. But if the estates of the middling classes were to be taken away why not take those of the higher classes also? The middling classes, aye, and the working classes too, asked why this was to be so, while they were obliged to give up the fruits of their labour. It had been said the other day that if the property of Earl Fitzwilliam had been taxed in proportion to more humble individuals, he would have to pay no less than 180,000*l.* Now he did not wish that the noble Lord should be called upon to pay that sum; he did not wish that the noble Lord's family should be stripped of their estate, as they undoubtedly soon would be, if called upon to pay such enormous duties; but he said it was too bad that the fortunes of men of rank should be protected, while the middling classes were ruined, and that too by the very same Act of Parliament. He next came to the conveyances of estates of all descriptions, and his Resolution was—

"That in the case of conveyances of all sorts, the duty upon a thing of *5l.* or any thing under *20l.* value is *10s.*, and the duty upon a thing of *200,000l.* value, or any sum above that, is *1,000l.*; so that, in the latter case, it may be less than *10s.* per cent on the value of the thing conveyed; and, in the former case, if of *5l.* value, it is *200s.* per cent on the value of the thing conveyed; and thus, in this case, the poor man pays twenty times as much tax as the rich man on precisely the same sort of property, and under the same Act of Parliament; and that, as the Act will show, the weight of the duty goes on increasing from *10s.* per cent to *200s.* per cent, exactly in the proportion that the value of the property becomes smaller and smaller in amount."

His next Resolution related to leases, and this would exhibit another instance of the injustice that was done by these Acts to the labouring classes, viz.:—

"That in the case of leases of lands, tenements, &c., where the yearly rent is *5l.*, the Stamp-duty is *1l.*, or twenty per cent; but when the yearly rent is *1,000l.*, or any sum above that, the Stamp-duty is *10l.*, or one per cent; and that the tax goes on, from *400l.* a-year rental to *5l.* a-year rental, getting heavier and heavier, but increasing in the small rentals in a most disproportionate manner."

Now, the noble Lord (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) had stated, when he brought forward this subject on a former occasion, that the poor man did not suffer under these duties. Before he went further he would read to the House a letter from a poor man in Cornwall, which would show, that the contrary was the case. The writer of that letter referred to three Members of Parliament, whom as he, (the writer) said, he was sure would assist him (Mr. Cobbett) in his endeavours to remove the pressure of those taxes. Would those hon. Members afford him their assistance? He sincerely hoped they might be found ready to do so. The hon. Member proceeded to read the letter, in which the writer stated, that having seen his (Mr. Cobbett's) observations on the inequality of the Stamp-duty, he wished to point out the manner in which it pressed upon him and many others in his neighbourhood. In that part of the country (Cornwall) where he resided, it was customary for persons in humble life to rent from one to three and sometimes up to five acres upon a lease of ninety-nine years, or three lives. In this manner waste lands were often enclosed, the landlord receiving *2s. 6d.* per acre; but the above lease was renewable upon the falling in of any life upon the payment of a small fine. But upon such renewal of the lease the stamp upon it and its counterpart cost *3l. 5s.*, however small the fine. The writer went on to say that he had been obliged to renew his lease the other day, and on complaining to the attorney of the hardship of the Stamp-duty, that gentleman informed him that he considered that Stamp-duty was never intended by the Legislature to apply to the poor and industrious classes. "I hope not," said Mr. Cobbett "I sincerely hope too—nay, I am sure, that after this statement, I shall have the noble Lord (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) on my side of the question. The writer proceeded to state, that perhaps more than one hundred leases of this kind were renewed every year, the fines of which were frequently for small sums, sometimes so low as *10l.* or to *5l.*" He (Mr. Cobbett) felt assured that the Act was never intended to apply to persons of this description, and now that they had the subject before them, he trusted they would put it to rights. The letter further stated, that there was Mr. Peter, now in the House, who let lands in this way, and he was sure that Gentleman, and several others would assist him (Mr. Cobbett) on this occasion however they might differ from him on other points. These odious taxes produced a great deal of sorrow and misery amongst the middling classes, so much so, that next to the loss of a father or mother, their greatest grief was being obliged to deal with these Stamp Offices, and he doubted which was found to be the greater cause of sorrow. All property was taxed; book-debts and mortgages, although one halfpenny of either might never be collected, were not exempted from the legacy duty; but there could be no hope of ever recovering back again a single farthing paid for Stamp-duties, a kid might as well expect to escape from the lion's den. He wished he could say he fully believed that these taxes were not intended to operate in this manner. He wished his right hon. combatant (Mr. Spring Rice) opposite, would give him proof that such was the fact. If it were so intended, there was no word in the English language, copious as it was, which would sufficiently describe the baseness of the framers of that Act of Parliament. The 3rd Act of George the 4th provided for mortgages. Hon. Members would bear in mind that in 1822 there was a great transfer of mortgages. The Bank of England generously took the estates of the landed interest to nurse at that period. That was to say, that, having got all the money out of their pockets, they took estates, and gave them back some money, to the amount of some 4,000,000*l.* At that time an Act was passed, he would not say on purpose to screen the great estates from paying the Stamp-duty, but it had the effect of altering the law, so that upon every transfer instead of having what he must call a sham *ad valorem* duty, an estate of 200,000*l.* paid no more than an estate of 200*l.* He would again repeat that they made the law in order to exempt their own estates from the operation of that Act, and to keep it to be imposed upon the middling classes. Now if the right hon. Member opposite wished to plead a justification for such conduct, let him at once stand forward and say "It is right that it should be so," or else let him say "It is not so." If the right hon. Gentleman would do one of these things—and they were his only defence—he would save him the labour of addressing the House, and of unmercifully belabouring the poor box on the table with thumps as he had done in the course of his former address. He next came to mortgages, and must observe that in the case of leases of lands, tenements, &c., where the yearly rent is 5*l.*, the Stamp-duty is 1*l.*, or twenty per cent.; but where the yearly rent is 1,000*l.*, or any sum above that, the Stamp-duty is 10*l.*, or one per cent.; and that tax goes on, from 400*l.* a-year rental to 5*l.* a-year rental, getting heavier and heavier, but increasing in the small rentals in a most disproportionate manner. Now if this had even the semblance of justice, still he would ask was it sound policy? He would read the next Resolution, it was—

"That in the case of mortgages, bonds and securities of every description, if the amount of the mortgage, for instance, be 25*l.*, the amount of the stamp is 1*l.*, or 8*s.* per cent.; but if the amount of the mortgage be 20,000*l.* the amount of the stamp is 20*l.*, or 2*s.* per cent.; that in this case, the poor man pays forty times as much taxes as the rich man; and that the stamp is no more if the amount of the mortgage be 100,000*l.*; so that, in a case like this, the poor man pays two hundred times as much tax as the rich man; and that, in this case also, the tax goes on increasing in weight as the taxed person becomes poor."

He again called upon the right hon. Gentleman, or any hon. Gentleman, for a justification or a denial of this statement. Next, he would advert to the case with respect to annuities—and here he would observe that no man who had even a partial spark of human feeling could have passed this Act. He believed the noble Lord (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) and many other Members, had seats in that House when it was passed. But it could not have been drawn up by any man of feeling. It must have been the work of some dirty underling—some scrub of a lawyer. His resolution was—

"That in the case of annuities, if the annuity be for 10*l.*, or under, the amount of the stamp is 1*l.*; and that, in due proportion, an annuity of 2,000*l.* ought to pay a Stamp-duty of 200*l.*; but, instead of that, it pays a Stamp-duty of only 25*l.*; and if the annuity be for 10,000*l.* or any greater amount, it still pays a Stamp-duty of only 25*l.*; so that here the poor man pays forty or fifty times as much tax as the rich man; and that in this case also, the tax goes on getting heavier and heavier as the parties become more and more poor."

He was sorry the noble Lord opposite did not pay more attention to his statements; indeed, the noble Lord ought to have the Acts of Parliament before him in order to see if he were correct in his statements. He now came to promissory notes and bills of exchange, upon which point something like an offer had been made by the Vice President of the Board of Trade to meet him. That right hon. Gentleman was famous for financial reasoning, and had constructed tables on the subject. He should like to meet the right hon. Member on his own ground. The next Resolution was—

"That in the case of promissory notes and bills of exchange, not exceeding two months after date, if the sum be 40*s.*, or above 40*s*., and not exceeding 5*l*. 5*s*., the stamp is 1*s*.; and in the same proportion, the stamp on 3,000*l*. ought to be 28*l*. 11*s*., but that it pays only 15*s*.; and that for any higher sum the stamp is no more than 1*l*. 5*s*., instead of being, on 10,000*l*., 95*l*. 4*s*.; and that, therefore, in the former case, while the poor man pays nearly 1*l*. per cent. the rich man pays 6*d*. per cent.; and, in the latter case, while the poor man pays nearly 1*l*. per cent. the rich man pays 3*d*. per cent.; and that, therefore, in the first case, the poor man pays forty times as much as the rich man, and, in the latter case, nearly eighty times as much as the rich man; and here, as in all the former cases, the tax becomes heavier and heavier as the tax-payer becomes poorer and poorer; and that in bills of a longer date than two months the partiality is still greater, and weighs still more heavily on the needy man."

But the right hon. the under Secretary, met the whole of this argument, or thought to meet it, by asking what merchant would ever draw a Bill for 10,000*l*., if subject to a Stamp-duty of 95*l*. (the supposed average increase); but did he (Mr. Cobbett) ever advocate the imposition of any such Stamp-duty on a bill for 10,000*l*.? Did he ever say that there ought to be anything at all upon it? No; what he did say was, that the poor should pay in the same moderate proportion as the rich, that was to say, that where the rich man paid a moderate rate of 4*l*. or 5*l*. on a large stamp, the poor man should on his small stamp, be charged a penny or twopence. Such, however, was not the case. Government laid a heavy hand upon the greater number. This might be very good policy on the part of a tax-grinder, or a tax-gatherer. If the only object were to get the money from the pockets of the people, this, perhaps, might be the wisest way. But he believed that in the end it would not be found the wisest way, as it would have the effect of extorting statements such as those he was then making —and by and by, those statements would get abroad into the country, and would be found by some who would avail themselves of them to enfeeble instead of strengthening the law, and to evade instead of paying the taxes. He did not deny that his intentions and wish were that these statements should make their way throughout the kingdom; and if the people did not see their interests, and act upon them, it would be their own faults. He would say also that from one end of the kingdom to the other, the Legislature was called upon to do its duty to the middle classes of the people. If they refused to attend to that call, on their head be the consequences. It was the same with the Stamps on Custom-house bonds, for duties, drawbacks, &c. No higher Stamp-duty was paid for clearing, or bonding, or whatever it was called, fifty pipes of wine, than for a single pipe. This was most monstrously unjust. But, agreeably to all the other parts of the system, it laid a heavy hand on the larger number of the people. It affected especially that class, standing between the poor and the rich, whom it ought to be the policy of Government to take by the hand, and raise up; yet that was the class which it appeared to be the sole object of the system to crush. The same principle was to be found in the duty on life insurances; his Resolution respecting which was—

"That, in the case of insurance of lives, where the sum insured amounts to less than 500*l*. the stamp is 1*l*.; that if it amount to 500*l*. the stamp is 2*l*.; that, if it amount to 5000*l*. or upwards, the stamp is 5*l*., so that the man who insures 10,000*l*. pays only 1*s*. per cent; while he who insures for less than 500*l*. and suppose that to be 300*l*., pay 6*s*. 8*d*. per cent.; and thus the man of scanty means pays nearly seven times as much as the man of wealth."

With respect to stamps on receipts, the prosecutions were innumerable, and petitions from different parts of the country had poured in complaining of them, but they were not worse than the others to which he alluded, but were more felt only because they were more frequent. He proposed on this subject to move the following Resolution:—

"That, in the case of receipts, if the sum be 2*l*. the stamp is 2*d*.; if the sum be 1,000*l*., the stamp is 10*s*., when in due proportion it ought to be 4*l*. 3*s*. 4*d*., that thus the poor man pays more than eight times as much tax as the rich man; and if the sum go on increasing to a hundred thousand, or a million pounds, still the stamp is only 10*s*.; and that for any sum expressed to be in full of all demands, whether it be for two pounds or a million, the stamp is always 10*s*.; so that in this case it may be fairly said, that the poor man pays a thousand times as much as the rich."

There was no part of the Stamp-duty more vexatious than that on receipts. A small tradesman, who did not turn more than 200*l.* or 300*l.* paid 10*l.* a-year for stamps; this in the course of twenty years would make upwards of 200*l.*—a pretty provision for one of his children, coupled with what was taken from him by the Assessed taxes. The tax-gatherer called, and the housekeeper feared to pay him without taking a receipt, but the tax-gatherer made him pay for that receipt; so that the people were taxed for being taxed. They were pretty much in the situation of some of the people over whom the Turks ruled, who, after they had eaten up every thing belonging to their subjects placed a tax upon their teeth; thus making them pay for the use of their jaws, when they no longer possessed anything to set them in motion. His next Resolution related to appraisements, and he would read it:—

"That, in the case of appraisements not exceeding the value of 50*l.* in the value of the thing appraised, the stamp is 2*s.* 6*d.*: that, if the thing appraised exceeds 500*l.* in value, though it amounts to a million of money or more, the stamp is but 1*l.*; so that here the tax falls almost wholly on persons in the middle rank of life, and the estates of the nobility and landed gentry are all nearly exempt: that an estate of the value of 100,000*l.* ought to pay an appraisement stamp of 250*l.* instead of the 1*l.* which it now pays; so that here the people in the middle rank of life pay, in many cases, 250 times as much as the rich."

This was not denied—it could not be denied—for there were the Acts of Parliament which afforded the best answer to those who attempted to contradict him. He would say, then, to the House, repeal these Acts—never mind the estates—let them go if they would. He would rather they should go than have the Government detested by millions of their fellow-countrymen. He would repeat, that nobody but a lawyer—nobody but such a creature with a soul so black and polluted—could have framed the Act of 55th George 3rd., by which the duty on deeds was limited to 2,160 words. The Resolution was—

"That, by the aforesaid Act of the 55th George 3rd, the duty on deeds, as expressed by the Act, limits its operation to deeds containing no more than 2,160 words; and the Act provides that for every 1,080 words beyond that number there shall be a further duty of 1*l.*, and no difference is made as to this further duty be the amount of the thing conveyed what it may; so that, in this respect, an estate of the value of 100*l.* pays as much duty as the estate of the value of a million of money; and that it frequently happens that the deed conveying the small estate requires a greater number of words than the deed conveying the large estate."

Could any thing be more unjust than this? Could anything be more unjust than that the conveyance of the estate of the noble Lord opposite, worth a million of money, should be subject to the same duty as the conveyance of the estate of a shop-keeper, worth only 50*l.*? That indeed was confiscation. The same principle which he had recently laid down with reference to persons of great property, he now laid down with reference to the middle classes, and he should be delighted to hear what the right hon. Gentleman could say in justification of such Acts of Parliament. He next came to the apprenticeships. It appeared that by the existing law, the parents of a poor boy who paid no premium with him, and who could afford none, were still obliged to pay 2*l.* for his indentures. Surely this was madness itself; a more injurious tax could not be devised. All who wished for the well-being of society were desirous that boys should learn some trade. People talked of a want of subordination and a want of morality in the country; what could be a greater curse than that tax by which a boy was prevented from learning a useful trade? He would read a passage from a memorial to the noble Lord (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) opposite, from the masters engaged in the hand-loom weaving. The memorialists stated, that it was a practice in their trade to take boys without indentures, as their parents could not pay for them; and that the masters had been nearly ruined by this practice, as the boys, feeling there was no power to detain them, generally went away at the end of a year, and engaged themselves elsewhere. This was greatly injurious to the master's interests, as he in all cases had been at much trouble and cost in teaching them their trade. They prayed the attention of the noble Lord to the reduction of this part of the Stamp-duty. It was a singular fact that the Stamp-duty on indentures was an *ad valorem* duty. It was imposed on a graduated scale from 30*l* to 1,000*l*. If the principle had been observed with respect to probates, it would have been well. But why was it observed in the case of apprenticeships? Because the sons of the nobility and gentry were never bound apprentices. Here, therefore, they could be impartial to the last degree. They could always be impartial where their own interests was not concerned; but when their own interests were concerned, then the law was made to suit those interests. This Resolution ran thus:

"That with regard to apprenticeships, the parents of a poor boy, who give no premium at all with him, have 2*l*. to pay for the indentures and the counterpart; that in this case, however, where nobody but tradesmen are concerned, the stamp goes on gradually and fairly from 30*l*. to 1,000*l*.; a premium under 30*l*. paying 1*l*. stamp, and 1,000*l*. paying 60*l*. stamp; because, in this case, the nobility, clergy, and landed gentry are not concerned; and here we observe that, while the poor boy's parents are thus taxed, the settlements made by the rich pay only a twenty-five shilling stamp on a thousand pounds."

He would next read that Resolution which referred to assignments of mortgages; and in it he asserted—

"That, according to the aforesaid Act, every transfer, assignment, disposition, assignation, or re-conveyance of any mortgage or wadset, had a duty imposed upon it, on a certain *ad valorem* scale; so that the transfer, disposition, or assignation, &c., paid the same *ad valorem* duty as was imposed on the original mortgage or wadset; but that, by the last of the aforementioned Acts—viz., chap. 117 of the 3rd of George 4, an alteration was made in this respect; and in such wise as to make the duty in all cases whatsoever the same sum—namely, 1*l*. 15*s*.; so that the stamp on the transfer of a mortgage of 200,000*l*., or a million of money, has since the year last-mentioned, been the same as on the transfer of a mortgage of no more than 200*l*.; thus compelling the tradesman, or other small proprietor, to pay just the same amount of duty on the transfer of his small mortgage, as is paid by the Peer upon a transfer of a mortgage to the amount of hundreds of thousands of pounds."

Was not this a hardship and a crying injustice towards the middling and more humble classes? With reference to the clergy, he found, and this he meant to move as a Resolution:—

"That there is a total exemption from this stamp tax for all bonds, contracts, mortgages, conveyances, deeds, and instruments for making provision for building, repairing, or purchasing houses, and other buildings for the beneficed clergy on their benefices."

Now, why, he would ask, were they to make this exemption in favour of the clergy, more than of any other set of men? Because, forsooth, they were part and parcel of the aristocracy of the country. Besides, the livings they enjoyed belonged to their patrons—to the rich and the great. If this exemption were to benefit the clergyman alone, no one would grudge it; but the clergyman had only a life interest in the living. On his death or removal, it fell back to the patron, who was one of those who made the law from which he himself was to derive a benefit. He next came to the consideration of the Auction duties; and these were more positively partial than any others. His Resolution on this subject was as follows:—

"That, by several Acts of Parliament, ending with 55th George 3rd, chap. 142, which Acts impose duties on things sold by auction, a duty of sevenpence in the pound is imposed, in Great Britain, on the amount of the sale of any interest in possession or reversion, in any freehold, customary, copyhold, or leasehold lands, tenements, houses, or hereditaments, and on any share or shares in the capital or joint stock of any Corporation or chartered Company, and of any annuities or sums of money charged thereon, and of any ships and vessels, and of any reversionary interest in the public funds, or of any plate or jewels; but that, on all sales of furniture, fixtures, pictures, books, horses, and carriages, and all other goods and chattels whatever, there is a duty of 1*s*. in the pound; while, on wool, sold for the benefit of the landowner or his tenant, or the first purchasers, the duty is only 2*d*. in the pound; and that from this duty all sales of goods, distrained for rent or tithes, and all sales of leases of lands or tenements, and all sales of woods, coppices, cattle, live or dead stock, and all unmanufactured produce of land, and of all produce of mines, when the sales are made on the lands or at the mines, are wholly exempted, as well as all the produce of quarries, or of implements used in quarries, mines, or farms;

and that thus, while every product of the hand of man has to bear this tax in almost a double degree, compared with lands and tenements themselves, the produce of the land bears no part of this tax, which is thus shifted from the shoulders of the great and the rich, and made to fall almost exclusively on the middle and working classes of society."

Why was the duty only 7*d.* in the pound on the sale of plate and jewels, and 1*s.* in the pound on furniture and other goods and chattels? Because the farmers and middle classes had no plate and jewels. Persons, too, who were compelled to sell their goods to keep out of a gaol, had to pay a duty of 1*s.* in the pound; while noblemen might sell their timber, underwood, and stock, without paying a farthing of duty. Why the latter? Because tradesmen had no timber or underwood to sell. If they had, a duty of a shilling in the pound would have been imposed upon the sale of it. Let them look, too, at the vast quantity of timber and underwood that was sold, and at the revenue which would be derived from a just duty upon its sale. Wool paid only 2*d.* in the pound. Why was wool thus favoured? Why wool? Because it was sold for the profit of the landlord. It was the property of the rich, and the articles which paid a duty of 1*s.* in the pound were the property of the poor. Let the right hon. Gentleman say at once, that it was right that such should be the case, and there was an end of the matter. This auction-duty was the more obnoxious, as it formed a branch of the excise, to the odious qualities of which those of the Spanish Inquisition were nothing; and the very name of which filled with horror all who had anything to do with the "holy office." Such was the inequality in the collection of some of these duties, that he understood that, in Edinburgh, they were only seven and a half per cent., while in England they were nearly ten per cent. It was impossible to deny these facts; nor could they be satisfactorily plastered over by any explanation. The best way for the Gentlemen opposite was to say, "we have the power to keep the law in force, and we will keep it in force." He proposed to conclude his series of Resolutions, thus:—

"That this House will, with as little delay as possible, make such an alteration in the several Acts, imposing duties on stamps and on sales at auctions, as shall cause the Peers, Nobles, Baronets, and other great landowners, to pay, in proportion to the amount of their property (subject to those duties), as great an amount in those duties as is paid by the fundholders, annuitants, tradesmen, manufacturers, farmers, mechanics, and the rest of the industrious classes of the kingdom; and as shall cause, in all cases, the rich to pay the same duties, in the same proportion as the poor."

That was the Motion which it was his intention to propose to the House. He was not indifferent as to its success. He sincerely wished that it might be agreed to, for the sake of the House and for the country. If he held the opinions which some hon. Gentlemen attributed to him, he should be gratified by the rejection of this just proposition; because he was convinced that the result of that rejection would be most disastrous. What had been the cause of the French Revolution? That the aristocracy would not listen to the representations made to them. The higher orders in France had been destroyed by the unequal taxation, rather than by the weight of taxation which had prevailed in that country. Arthur Young, who had visited France in 1787 (and those were greatly in error who fancied that the Revolution in that country did not commence long before it appeared to commence; for it began by the oppression of the people), stated the evils which existed in that country; and put forward as the foremost of those evils partial taxation. The rich were invariably favoured at the expense of the poor; on whom a double or treble amount of taxation was imposed. Goaded by their sufferings, and by the perpetual comparison of their situation with that of their rich and aristocratic neighbours, the people at length determined no longer to endure such tyranny and oppression; and that cause alone produced all the evils which ensued. Now, he hoped, after what he had said, the House would be ready to do justice—a tardy justice—a justice, he must say too long delayed—to the poor people of this country. He would not refer to old grievances. He, for one, was willing they should be forgotten—for ever buried in oblivion. He wished no ripping up—he asked only for justice for the future. He had done his duty in bringing the matter before the House; and whatever their decision might be, he was willing that the country should decide between them. The hon. Member concluded by moving as an Amendment on the Motion, for the Speaker to leave the Chair, the last Resolution which he had read to the House.

Mr. *Spring Rice*, in attempting to expose the absurdities and fallacies of the hon. Member, begged to assure the House, that he would not take up its time at any length were he not anxious to counteract the mischievous impression which the hon. Member's most unfounded statements might produce out of doors. Although he would not quarrel with the well-known vigorous impatience—not to say indiscretion—of the hon. Member, he must still express his opinion, that when notice had been given of the intention of his noble friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to ameliorate these laws, the more proper course would have been for the hon. mover of the Resolutions to await the Ministerial proposition, and then to have addressed himself closely and fairly to it. Instead of doing that which, in common fairness, the hon. Member was bound to do, he now came forward with a repetition of his former complaints. This was not in keeping with the hon. Member's proverbial ingenuousness and singleness of purpose, and he thought he had a right to complain of it. He also had to complain of the ingratitude of the hon. Member. He held in his hand a book—not a volume of the Journals of that House, nor a work, which, being of great research and value, was hard to get at—but it was a work published by one Mr. Dunn, called *The Law and Daily Commercial Remembrancer for* 1833, where, he could assure hon. Members, they could find the whole matter of the hon. member for Oldham's speech with much less expense of time and trouble than had that evening been exacted from them. All that the hon. Member uttered came from Dunn—he made Dunn his own—Dunn and he were identical. From the publication of this book by Dunn, he supposed was to be dated that new era which the hon. Member had foretold should commence when he was invested with legislatorial power—improvements were to be made in every quarter on the advent of this new Shiloh—this political Saviour. For his part, he thought the better way would have been that Dunn be read by the Clerk of the House, and entered on the Journals. He dared not, of course, impute motives to the hon. Member, as that would be unparliamentary; but very luckily he could go close into the enemy's quarters in another way—he could drive at the double—for it would not be unparliamentary to treat Dunn as Dunn deserved to be treated. Dunn was not protected by privilege, and he, therefore, hesitated not to say, that that book, which so strangely agreed with all the hon. Member had uttered, was filled with the grossest calumnies, and the most unjustifiable and daring exaggerations. But he would go to the facts. The hon. Member's great effort in his speech was to show that in these Acts the rich had been especially careful to protect themselves at the expense of the poor—in fact to throw the entire burthen on that class of society. Was that true? Most certainly not. The very first schedule of the table referred to by the hon. Member proved that it was false—namely, the table of the exemptions from duties in favour of the poor—which table the hon. Member never once mentioned, for reasons which it was superfluous for him to specify. Certainly, it might be a question whether the indulgence should not have been carried further; but it was not even mentioned by the hon. Member, amidst his vituperation of the tyrant rich. He contented himself with a general assertion, that the schedules got heavier and heavier as the people became poorer and poorer. He would, however, take the several items referred to by the hon. Member seriatim, and would show from them, that nothing could be more false than to allege that the rich were exempt, or proportionately less taxed than the poor. He would admit, and had before admitted, that the duties on stamps and auctions contained anomalies in their details which required remedy; but why not, in fairness, wait for the remedy, and not endeavour to unjustly sour the mind of the poor against the rich throughout the country? First, then, with respect to transfer and legacy duties. The hon. Member was greatly in error if he supposed that only the rich were landholders, and effected transfers of landed property; there were many transfers of small portions of land effected by the comparatively poor; but he admitted that that was but the exception. As to real property not being subject to legacy duty, let it be remembered, that money might be transferred in millions without any tax whatever; but land, in every change, was made to contribute to the revenue, and that heavily, by imposts on conveyances, mortgages, &c. Now, the radical fallacy, or rather misrepresentation of the hon. Member, was his basing all his assumptions on extreme duties, instead of the mean or average of any scale of duties. In every scale of duties, be it long or short, there must necessarily be a point or extreme, which, on the face of it, it would be most unfair to found any general conclusions upon—take, for example, the 10*l.* franchise, or the stamp receipt minimum, or any other extreme; no results being valid, because not true and fair, save those derived from the average or mean duties. The hon. Member founded all his statements on extremes, when, in fairness, they should be based on the mean or average duty. He would base his counter-statement on the average duties, confident that the result would be a total overthrow of the hon. Member's gross misrepresentations. To begin, then, with the Probate-duty, which the hon. Member had represented as pressing with peculiar severity on the poor. What would the House think, and, still more, what would the deluded public say, when he told them that all legacies under 20*l.* were altogether free from duty, and that the hon. Member was aware of the fact, and yet concealed it? And why did the hon. Member conceal this fact? Why, that it might go forth to the public that the rich were unfeeling—regardless of the duty they owed to those beneath them—that, with "malice prepense," they shifted the national burthens from their own shoulders to those less able to bear them—that they were in fact tyrants. Let that one fact be a running commentary on the mischievous powers of one who might have turned his great gifts to nobler and better purposes than that of exciting the bad passions of the poor against the rich. Mr. Dunn's statement on the Probate-duty was this:—If the deceased had property above the value of 20*l.*, his successor pays a duty of 10*s.*, that is 2*l.* per cent; but if the party dying leaves any sum from 30,000*l.* to 500,000*l.* the duty is only 30*s.* per cent. But to the facts. From 20*l.* to 100*l.* the mean was 60*l.*, and the duty on that was 10*s.* or 16*s.* 8*d.* per cent. From 100*l.* to 200*l.* the mean was 150*l.*, and the duty, unfortunately for poor Dunn was 1*l.* 4*s.* The mean of 250*l.* paid a duty of 2*l.* per cent; the mean of 375*l.* of 2*l.* 2*s.* 8*d.*; and of 900*l.* of 2*l.* 8*s.* 10*d.* Such was the fact, unfortunately for Mr. Dunn, though, when they mounted higher up the scale, the rate of duty between 20,000*l.* and 25,000*l.* was only 1*l.* 11*s.* 1*d.* per cent. Here he admitted that he came to that portion of the Stamp Acts, in which were anomalies, which as he had before stated, no one would wish otherwise than to see corrected. But the remedy was announced in the order-book of the House; and it would have been but fair in the hon. Member to have awaited its production. He could go through the scale of the Probate-duty in the same manner, not for the purpose of proving that the scale was invariably right, but for that of showing that the hon. Gentleman was invariably wrong. There was no one point on which the hon. Member had rested his case that was not capable of being overthrown when it came to be fairly considered. It must be admitted, that the Probate duty was oppressive in particular instances, but it certainly did not deserve the charges which the hon. Member had brought against it. He did not pretend to defend every part of that duty, but merely to show, in answer to the hon. Member, that the scale did not get higher as the people on whom it operated were poorer, nor lower as those whom it affected were richer. He now came to the case of conveyances. The hon. Member made the same statement with regard to this duty as with regard to the rest; he said, that the amount of duty diminished as the value of the property on which it attached increased. The scale of the duty on conveyances was to be dealt with in the same manner as that of the Probate-duty. He would willingly give up to the hon. Member a part of these duties—namely, those which attached upon conveyances from 10*l.* to 35*l.*, or even to 100*l.* He did not intend to defend them; but though there were cases of conveyances among the poorer classes where the conveyance was for a sum within 100*l.*, on which he was not prepared to defend the duty, still, he must say, that the hon. Member was not warranted in comparing the levying of that duty to proceedings under the Inquisition, nor in describing it as likely to break the confidence of the country, on account of the unjust height to which it had been carried. Now, how stood this duty? Why, thus: at 225*l.* the duty per cent was 17*s.* 9*d.*; at 400*l.* he admitted that it was diminished to 15*s.* per cent; but at 625*l.* it was 19*s.* 2*d.*;

and at 1,075*l.* it was 1*l.* 6*s.* 7*d.* per cent. So that, on this point, in place of the duty increasing in pressure according to the lowness of the sum, it really increased in amount according to the increased value of the consideration. He now came to the duty on leases—a duty which the hon. Member said pressed exclusively on the poor. Did the hon. Member not know that the great mass of the property held by the lower classes of the people was held not upon lease, but at will? Did he believe that the great bulk of the cottages of the peasantry were held on lease? [Mr. *Cobbett* was understood to admit that they were not held on lease.] Then that was all he wanted, for it formed a sufficient answer to the hon. Member's own statement as to the unjust pressure on the lower orders of the people. Facts would illustrate this part of the case also, for the returns on the Table showed, that not less than 1,128,705 tenements were entirely exempt from the House and Window-duty, and all of them that were held at will were exempt from the Stamp-duty on leases. He would proceed to the next Resolution, which related to mortgages. The hon. member for Oldham averred, 'That, in the case of mortgages, bonds, 'and securities of every description, if the 'amount of the mortgage, for instance, be '25*l.*, the amount of the stamp is 1*l.*, or '80*s.* per cent; but if the amount of the 'mortgage be 20,000*l.*, the amount of the 'stamp is 20*l.*, or 2*s.* per cent; that, 'in this case, the poor man pays forty 'times as much tax as the rich man; and 'that the stamp is no more if the amount 'of the mortgage be 100,000*l.*; so that in 'a case like this, the poor man pays 200 'times as much tax as the rich man; and 'that in this case also the tax goes on increasing in weight as the taxed person 'becomes poor.' Now, he would ask the hon. member for Oldham whether, when he said that upon a mortgage of 25*l.* the poor man paid forty times as much tax as the rich man, he meant to say that mortgages for that amount were common among the poor? The most common mortgages upon the poor were those placed on their premises by the lower class of publicans, and, in those cases, no stamp was necessary, for the brewer was generally the mortgagee, and the mortgage was effected by a deposit of title-deeds. In that case no Stamp duty was paid.

Mr. *Cobbett* — I never heard of it.

Mr. *Spring Rice.*—"Then am I completely taken in." The hon. Gentleman had forgotten many things in the ardour with which he read the lucubrations of Mr. Dunn on this subject. But though the publicans offered the most numerous instances of this sort of mortgage, it was certainly practised in other cases, and the deposit of the title deeds formed what was called an equitable mortgage, sufficient in many cases, to satisfy the creditor. Mortgages to the amount of 25*l.* were not very common, and yet they were those of the duty on which the hon. Member most complained. The fact was, that in these matters it was the lawyer, the black and cruel-souled lawyer, as the hon. Member would, perhaps, call him, and not the stamp collector, who checked the frequency of mortgages. It was not the amount of the Stamp-duties that affected them. If that was the case, then all the sympathy of the hon. Member was wasted. [Mr. *Cobbett* said, that however the law might be evaded, such was the law on the Statute-book.] He knew it was—he knew that the law was there—he knew it was in the Act, but was it in the deed. Upon this nonentity or next to nonentity, the hon. member for Oldham must display all his sympathies for the poor. He might as well, because the writ *de hæretico comburendo* was still in the Statute-book, display his sympathies about the heretics that might still be burned under that act, and his horror of the Reformation, against which he understood that the hon. Member entertained very strong prejudices. If all this sympathy were to be displayed about the non-existing mortgages of 25*l.*, the hon. Member must have a bad case to support; or if he had a good case, why bolster it up with such weak and unfounded arguments? Next came the Resolution about annuities:—'That in the case of 'annuities, if the annuity be for 10*l.* or 'under, the amount of the stamp is 1*l.*; 'and that, in due proportion, an annuity 'of 2,000*l.* ought to pay a Stamp-duty 'of 200*l.*; but, instead of that, it pays a 'Stamp-duty of only 25*l.*; and if the 'annuity be for 10,000*l.*, or any greater 'amount, it still pays a Stamp-duty of 'only 25*l.*; so that here the poor man 'pays forty or fifty times as much tax as 'the rich man, and that, in this case also, 'the tax goes on getting heavier and 'heavier, as the parties become more and 'more poor.' Now, in this Resolution, the hon. Member had referred only to one class of annuities, whereas there were two classes—those secured upon freehold estates, and those which rested upon other valid securities. He wished he was a lawyer, notwithstanding the heavy denunciations of the hon. Member against that body, for then he should be able most completely to show how much the hon. Member was in error on this point. The hon. Member had referred to Voluntary Annuities—to those granted on a money consideration, and to those granted especially out of a freehold estate. The latter class surely could not be said to be contained in the division of duties that chiefly affected the poor. The hon. Member had represented, that, on Annuities granted for a money consideration, but a small amount of duty was payable; but the hon. Member had not said, at the same time, that when an annuity was granted for a money consideration, the duty on conveyances also attached. The hon. Member had either omitted that part of the case, or he was ignorant of it. In either case, his observations on the effect of the duty were unwarranted, and the House had a right to complain if a Member, who professed to call for their judgment on facts, either suppressed some of those facts, or had omitted to make himself acquainted with them. The hon. Member had then alluded to the subject of promissory notes and bills of exchange, and said, with regard to that, as with regard to other parts of the question, that the duty became lower as the amount of the subject of it became greater. Did not the hon. Member know, that even at this time there were but very few bills of exchange or promissory notes to a large amount, and that, even with these few, if the amount of duty was increased, it would be at once most readily evaded, by cutting up one large bill of exchange into several small ones? On this subject, as well as on that of the receipts, the hon. Member had fallen into a most glorious absurdity, a most evident fallacy. He conceived, that because a person was rich, he therefore dealt in nothing but large bills of exchange and promissory notes. Yet nothing could be a greater mistake. That reminded him of a saying of the first Lord Liverpool, that because England was a rich country, therefore it must have a rich standard,—or, to use commoner phraseology, "Who slays fat oxen must himself be fat;" who is rich himself, should give no notes or bills of exchange but for large sums. The fact, however, was, that the expenditure of the rich man depended more on the multiplication of small bills, than upon the consolidation of large sums. A similar remark might be applied to the receipt stamps. The hon. Member for Oldham had very pathetically put the hardship of a tradesman having to pay a receipt of 10*l.* Indeed, did not the hon. Member know, that whatever might be the amount of the stamp, it formed but a part of the price of the commodity, and that it was the consumer of that commodity, and not the seller of it, who paid the receipt Stamp-duty? Instead, therefore, of the whole duty falling upon one man, it was most extensively distributed, and its weight, therefore, scarcely felt. He now came to the Resolution regarding insurances for lives. That Resolution was as follows:—'That, in case of insurance 'of lives, where the sum insured amounts 'to less than 500*l.*, the stamp is 1*l.*: that 'if it amount to 500*l.*, the stamp is 2*l.*; 'that if it amount to 5,000*l.* or upwards, 'the stamp is 5*l.*; so that the man who 'insures 10,000*l.* pays only 1*s.* per cent; 'while he who insures for less than 500*l.*, 'and suppose that to be 300*l.*, pays 6*s.* 8*d.* 'per cent; and thus the man of scanty 'means pays nearly seven times as much 'as the man of wealth.' Why, instead of this duty being diminished in proportion to the value of the insurance, the fact was, that if a man made two insurances of 5,000*l.*, he would have less duty to pay, than on one insurance for 10,000*l.* He said, that the incorrectness of the hon. Member must either arise from gross neglect on the part of the hon. Member; or if it did not arise from neglect, it was most unfair in the hon. Member to endeavour to seduce the House into assenting to Resolutions, which the hon. Member informed them were founded upon facts, but which were directly in the teeth of every fact and every document which he had consulted. He now came to the hon. Member's Resolution regarding appraisements. It was as follows:—"That, in the case of appraisements not exceeding the value of 50*l.* in the value of the thing appraised, the stamp is 2*s.* 6*d.*; that if the thing appraised exceeds 500*l.* in value, though it amount to 1,000,000*l.* or more, the stamp is but 1*l.*; so that here the tax falls almost wholly on persons in the middle rank of life, and the estates of the nobility and landed gentry are all nearly exempt; that an estate of the value of 100,000*l.* ought to pay an appraisement stamp of 250*l.* instead of the 1*l.* which it now pays; so that here the people in the middle rank of life pay, in many cases, 250 times as much as the rich." This was a statement, which, if allowed to pass uncontradicted, was likely to have great weight with uneducated and unenlightened individuals; but the appraisement of an estate being made, what followed? He might derive great aid to his argument from referring to the lawyer's bill of costs, of which, thank God! he knew nothing personally. When a man appraised an estate, he did so, not merely to get some knowledge of its value, but with a view to dispose of it. If so, then, the duty on appraisement was not the only duty he had to pay, for then came the duty on conveyances, which had been already noticed, and which amounted to 95*l.* on 10,000*l.* So that the rich man, whom the hon. member for Oldham described as fenced round with protection on every side would have to pay, not only the duty on the appraisement, but also the duty on the conveyance, and thus the rich man, instead of paying 250 times less than the poor man, had actually to pay about eight times as much. Then came the hon. Member's Resolution about the Stamp-duties on indentures; and here the hon. Member admitted that the amount of the stamp had been fixed upon an *ad valorem* duty. But even here *surgit amari aliquid.* Justice was done to the poor in this instance because the nobility, clergy, and landed gentry had no interest in being unjust. But were there no items in this scale which applied in an analogous case to the rich? The hon. Member loved to deal with the parsons, the poor parsons, the baronets, the barons, and the rest of the nobility. Now, had he taken the trouble to inform himself whether anything analogous to this scale took place in anything which related to them? Had he ever heard of such things as fees upon granting titles of honour? There, too there was a graduated scale. 100*l.* was the fee upon the creation of a Baronet, 150*l.* on the creation of a Baron, 200*l.* on the creation of a Viscount, 250*l.* on the creation of an Earl, 300*l.* on the creation of a Marquess, and 350*l.* on the creation of a Duke. Was that fair? [Mr. *Cobbett* "Yes."] He must next advert to the hon. Member's Resolution regarding mortgages, and especially to that part of it which states, "That there is a total exemption from this Stamp-tax for all bonds, contracts, mortgages, conveyances, deeds, and instruments for making provision for building, repairing, or purchasing houses, and other buildings, for the beneficed clergy on their benefices." Now, the hon. Member had been pleased to forget the heavy Stamps which clergymen had to pay upon their presentation to livings, upon their obtaining possession of advowsons: and, therefore, when he complained that the bonds into which they entered for the repairs of the houses upon their benefices were exempt from Stamp-duties, without making any mention of the other Stamp-duties to which they were liable, he was leading all uninformed persons who heard him to form a very erroneous inference respecting the exemptions which the poor parsons enjoyed. He had now gone through the hon. Member's Resolutions upon the Stamp-duties. He need not say how grateful he was to the House for the attention with which it had listened to him. He would now proceed to the hon. Member's Resolution respecting the Auction-duties, for he was determined to follow the hon. Member—or rather, the hon. Member's friend and patron, Mr. Dunn—through all the long walk which they had chalked out for him. On the Auction-duties the hon. Member had been most particularly vehement, and here again he said you might trace the injury inflicted by the rich upon the poor. "The general rate" said he "is on all sales by auction in which the poor are concerned 1*s.* in the 1*l.*; on all sales where they are not concerned, 7*d.* I will show you, that under the lower duty are introduced all things affecting, or connected with the luxuries of the rich; and that, under the higher duty are comprised all the things belonging to the poor—the suffering poor." Now, what were the articles which came under the higher duties? "Furniture:" here the rates were equal for rich and poor. "Fixtures;" the same. "Pictures;" have the poor or the rich the greater interest in the sale of pictures? "Books;" are books of value purchased more by the rich or the poor? "Horses and carriages and all other goods and chattels whatever." These were articles which the poor might possess; but if they did possess them, how was their possession of them to be reconciled with the irremediable distress in which the hon. Member represented the poor to be involved in every part of the empire? Then came the hon. Member's complaint that a duty of only 7*d.* in the 1*l.* was imposed on the sale of plate and jewels. "Here" said the hon. Member, "are the nobility and gentry imposing a duty of only 7*d.* upon the sale of their plate and jewels, while they compel the poor to pay a duty of 1*s.* in the 1*l.* on the sale of their poor and wretched furniture." But was it possible that the hon. Member could be ignorant that upon this point he was only stating half the truth? Did he not know that, previously to its being sold by auction, all plate had paid a Stamp-duty. Did he not know that gold plate paid a duty of 17*s.* an ounce, and that silver paid a duty of 1*s.* 6*d.* an ounce, both of which were heavy taxes? The same observation applied to jewels. If the hon. Member had applied at the Custom-house, he would have been informed that a duty of twenty per cent. was paid on the value of all jewels which were set, and of ten per cent. upon all jewels which were unset, with the exception of diamonds, which paid no duty—an exemption, by-the-by, for which he never could account. The Legislature had, therefore, taxed the luxuries of the rich in these instances as fully, indeed more fully, than it had ever taxed the commodities of the poor. The right hon. Gentleman then proceeded to comment upon that part of the Resolution which states that on wool sold for the benefit of the landowner or his tenant the duty is only 2*d.* in the 1*l.*; but on this point the inference of the hon. Member (Mr. Cobbett) was manifestly incorrect, inasmuch as he stated that this tax was kept low for the benefit of the landlords, when the fact was that the wool was almost invariably sold for the benefit of the poor tenants. The right hon. Gentleman then thanked the House for the patience with which it had listened to him. His object was not to go through a minute and tedious detail of facts; he was only anxious to meet the hon. member for Oldham on the broad principle that the policy of that House and of the aristocracy and gentry of England had not been systematically to oppress and degrade the poor. That was the only consideration which had induced him to trespass so long upon their attention. The hon. Member more ingeniously than ingenuously, had endeavoured to connect with this subject the unequa taxation which prevailed in France before the revolution. He had told them that the refusal to redress the grievances of the French nation upon that point had led to the confusion and disorder which distinguished the French revolution. Now, he did not deny that such was the fact, but he must object to the inference which the hon. Member deduced from it. If there was one principle which could be contrasted with another, it was the principle which governed the taxation of France before the revolution, and that which now governed the taxation of England. Were there in England any personal distinctions which gave the parties who enjoyed them exemption from the payment of taxes? The hon. Member must have heard of the *corvée* the *taille* and the *gabelle.* Did he mean to say that anything like them was to be found in our law; the exemptions in our Statute-book were in favour of the poor. The exemptions in France were in favour of the rich. Instead of the aristocracy being opposed in spirit to the poor, the proudest duke in the land was connected with the commonalty by his second son, whilst the poorest man was in his turn connected with the nobility by the reflection that if he had merits to ensure the distinction, the highest honours of the peerage were not too high for his grasp. He contended that the liberties of England had never had better or truer champions than her gallant and high-minded aristocracy; and the man who sought to deprive them of the respect which was their due, did not deal wisely by the institutions of his country, nor fairly by the individuals whom he attacked.

Mr. *Hume* said, that it appeared to him that the hon. member for Oldham and his right hon. friend opposite approximated closely in their result, that they were merely cavilling about words, and that, too, in language which he must say was on both sides not the most courteous and temperate. As to the eulogy which his right hon. friend had passed upon the peerage of England, it might be received with cheers in that House, but it would be received with very little acclamations elsewhere by every man who recollected their forced assent to the passing of the Reform Bill. It appeared to him that the very representations which his right hon. friend had just made corroborated all the statements of the hon. member for Oldham. If he understood the meaning of that hon. Member it was this—that the Legislature, which consisted of the rich and noble, had systematically endeavoured to oppress the poor, and to protect themselves. His right hon. friend had admitted this to be true to a certain extent; for in referring to the statement of the hon. member for Oldham he had said—"Oh, don't object to this any more—we admit it to be a grievance, but we have bills ready for the redress of it." He asserted that his right hon. friend's statement was full of fallacies, by which he himself could not have been deluded. He could not see any reason why a poor man should pay a heavy legacy duty upon 300*l.* of personal property, and a rich man pay nothing on receiving from his ancestors an estate of as many hundreds a-year. Was it, therefore, fair to state that the complaint about the inequality of the legacy duty was a mere rubbish of fallacies in the face of a fact like this that the poor man pays more for receiving a legacy of 500*l.* than the rich man for receiving an estate of 500,000*l.*? But, said his right hon. friend, "all legacies of 20*l.* are exempted from duty." True, but the fact was, that if you had to go through the usual forms of the courts for this 20*l.*, nearly the whole sum would be swept away in legal expenses; and it would not be worth either the seeking or the having. As a fact indicative of the temper, in which the legacy duties were imposed, he would state that the plan of raising revenue by means of them was borrowed from Holland. Mr. Pitt introduced two Bills for that purpose—one imposing a scale of duties on legacies of personal property, and another imposing a similar scale upon real property. The House passed the first; but being composed of landowners, threw out the last. He complained that the arguments of the hon. member for Oldham had been treated that night with a ribaldry—he could call it nothing else—which they did not deserve. The fact which he had just quoted proved that the influence of the landlords in that House had prevented justice from being done to the country at large, so far as regarded the taxation of real property. As to the arguments of the hon. Gentleman with respect to the Window-tax, they were, he considered, an attempt to delude the House. The hon. Gentleman had taken only the *minimum*, and had not gone to cases where the great inequality of the tax would be much more clearly shown. Now, as to the Stamp-duties on conveyances of property, the hon. Gentleman had not taken those cases in which it could be shown that the duty diminished in proportion as the sum increased beyond a certain amount; so that, on the larger sums the duty paid was much less in the proportion than on the smaller. The probate duty on 1,000*l.* was three per cent; that on 5,000*l.* was two per cent; that on 50,000*l.* was 1*l.* 10*s.* per cent; and the same on 100,000*l.* and all higher sums. Now, take the duty on administrations—on 1,000*l.*, the duty was 45*l.* or four and a half per cent; on 5,000*l.* it was 150*l.* or three per cent,; and, on 50,000*l.*, it was no more than two and a quarter per cent. In short, every one of those cases proved the inaccuracy of the right hon. Gentleman in coming to the small sums. It could not be denied that there was a disposition in the Legislature to make exceptions in favour of the nobility. It was well known that before the French revolution there were many exemptions in favour of the *noblesse* of that country, but those exemptions were slight in the comparison of the exemptions from taxation made in favour of the rich in this country, by the monopoly which the Corn-laws gave to landed property. He would say let an inquiry be made, and a valuation of property as regarded taxation, and he was certain that what he stated would prove correct. He thought it would have been much better if, instead of recrimination, the right hon. Gentleman had admitted the existence of the inequality of taxation, and proposed that that inequality should be remedied.

Mr. *Matthias Attwood* expressed his surprise that after the speech of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Spring Rice)—a speech of great ability, and containing details of the most minute accuracy—in which the statements of the hon. member for Oldham, had been completely refuted, those statements should have been repeated by the hon. member for Middlesex. He was surprised, after what had been stated in the House, to hear the hon. member for Middlesex re-assert the charges of the hon. member for Oldham, in stronger language, and he would almost say in a coarser manner than that of the hon. member for Oldham himself. Giving credit to the right hon. Gentleman for the great accuracy of his most convincing statement, he could not but regret that such a refutation had not gone forth to the country at a much earlier period—that it had not been made by the noble Lord (Lord Althorp) in answer to the first speech on this subject of the hon. member for Oldham. That hon. Member had made many statements which were now proved to be fallacious. They were made eight weeks ago; they had gone forth to the country, and had worked their effect on the minds of the people. The charge was, that 8,000,000*l*. of taxes were raised, but that they were so ingeniously contrived that they pressed on the poor while the rich were, for the greater part, exempt. The charge was now proved, by a most convincing and unanswerable statement, to be wholly without foundation, as indeed must be admitted by the hon. member for Oldham himself, and no doubt it would be so admitted, if the hon. Member had not allowed his strong understanding to be so biassed that he had shown himself more ignorant than the lowest of those whom he wished to instruct. The hon. Member had shown himself completely ignorant of the operation of those taxes against which he declaimed. With regard to that branch of the hon. member for Oldham's statement which respected the stamps on bills of Exchange he desired to make one observation, namely, that as the cost of bills of Exchange was raised on the transfer of goods, the rich as well as the poor bore it equally and in proportion to the quantity consumed. From his means of knowledge on that branch of the subject, he was convinced that if Parliament should determine to raise the scale, and imposed a high duty on large bills, they would be adopting the very best means of harassing the poor, for the rich man would decline drawing the bill at all, and thus compel the man in straitened circumstances, if he required accommodation, to bear the whole cost. With respect to the exemptions of land from legacy duty, it was on a fair principle, as land did not carry with it the means of paying a high duty, the same as personal property. There were many difficulties in the entering into possession of landed property—such as the difficulty of proving the title, and others, which might put off the payment of the duty from month to month, and from year to year; so that a tax of that kind would be a most inconvenient mode of supplying the Exchequer. The hon. member for Oldham was not alone in his assertions, that the taxes had been so framed as to press on the poor, while the rich were exempt. There were others, who, to court a temporary popularity, had raised a similar cry in the country. That cry had gone forth and worked its effect. He again repeated, that there was great cause for regret that the noble Lord (Lord Althorp) had omitted to reply to the statements of the hon. Member at the period when he originally brought the subject before the House. If he had done so much of ill feeling and much misunderstanding would have been spared. He could not further avoid expressing the regret and dissatisfaction with which he listened to the repeated attacks and insinuations which it had become fashionable with Ministers and their supporters to make on the conduct of former administrations. Such attacks came, he thought, with a particularly bad grace from those who now held office, and could only be calculated to distract public observation from existing defects. If Ministers were sensible of the errors of past administrations, it would, in his opinion, be much better to set about their correction than to occupy the attention of the House with idle complaints, the only object of which could be to raise their own characters by depreciating those of others.

Lord *Althorp* said, that after the very able and conclusive speech of his right hon. friend (Mr. Spring Rice), it was not his intention to say a word on this subject; and he should not have risen but for the observations of the hon. member for Whitehaven in the close of his speech. The hon. Member, after repeating some of the able arguments of his right hon. friend, and adding some of his own, had attacked him (Lord Althorp) for not having answered the first speech of the hon. member for Oldham. He admitted, that at the time referred to he had not given that hon. Gentleman a sufficient answer, and amongst other reasons, he was unable to do so, from the vagueness of the terms in which the hon. Member's Motion was couched, and from the nature of the speech with which he introduced it. The hon. Member talked of showing that the poor paid towards the taxes forty times as much as the rich, and dealt in other statements equally unfounded in truth. To such statements he confessed he was not prepared to give an answer; and he confessed his having omitted to do so occasioned him very little regret. His right hon. friend had expressed a wish to reply to the hon. Member's statements, and his right hon. friend certainly had done so much better than he could have done. As to the charge of not reducing the expenditure more, he would only say, that he had no wish to underrate the labours of his predecessors in office. He gave them credit for the exertions they had made, and he must take the same credit to the present Government for a disposition to make all the reductions in its power.

Mr. *O'Connell* was surprised at the charge of ignorance made by the hon. member for Whitehaven against his hon. friend the member for Oldham, when the hon. Member had shown that he did not know the difference between the legacy and the probate duty. The probate duty was payable in that way which pressed heavily on the poor. There were other duties connected with bequests of which the great weight pressed on the poor, while the rich were comparatively exempt. Without going at that hour into the details, he would only observe, that the hon. member for Oldham ought not to have been attacked when his object was plainly to relieve the poor from the burthens which pressed so heavily upon them.

Mr. *Warre* was surprised to hear the statement of the hon. member for Middlesex, as to the comparative exemptions of the French *noblesse*, before the French revolution, and the higher classes in England, from the pressure of taxation. He should be glad to learn where the hon. Member had collected his historical facts on that subject; for he was sure that a just reference to the history of that period would show that there was no parallel between the two cases. If he would refer to the able work of Mr. Arthur Young on the subject, he would find, that the exemptions from taxation of the French *noblesse* before the revolution bore no comparison whatever to those of the rich of this country in the present day. In fact, the rich in England were not exempt; but in France, at the period alluded to, the exemptions of the nobility freed them from almost every species of taxation. As to the charge of a want of reduction of taxation, he must say, that where reduction had been carried to a great extent, it was much more difficult to reduce further than it was when the first reduction commenced. If the late Government had reduced, they had much to reduce from. The other reductions since then had made the task much more difficult.

Mr. *Lennard* said, that the statements of the hon. member for Oldham were such as would have commanded his support, but that the Government had admitted, that there were great abuses in the system, and were prepared to remedy them. Under these circumstances he should vote on the side of Government.

The House divided, on the question that the words proposed by Mr. Cobbett to be left out, stand part of the question. —Ayes 250; Noes 26: Majority 224.

List of the NOES.

Attwood, T.
Blake, M.
Cobbett, W.
Faithfull, G.
Fielden, J.
Finn, W. F.
Fitzsimon, C.
Fryer, R.
Lalor, P.
Lowther, Hon. Col.
O'Connell, D.
O'Connell, J.
O'Connell, Maurice
O'Connell, Morgan
O'Connell, C.
Oswald, R. A.
Palmer, General
Pease, J.
Richards, J.
Roche, W.
Ruthven, E.
Scholefield, J.
Torrens, Lieut.-Col.
Vigors, N. A.
Warburton, H.

TELLERS.

Hume J.
O'Connor, F.

ARMY ESTIMATES.] The House then resolved itself into a Committee of Supply.

Mr. *Ellice* said, that as the number of men necessary for the service of the year had been already voted, it was only necessary for him briefly to recapitulate the statement already made to the House by his right hon. predecessor (Sir John Hobhouse), The additional force required for Ireland this year, as compared with the last, exceeded 3,000 men, and it was thought necessary to increase the force in the colonies, chiefly the West Indies and the Mauritius, nearly to the same amount. The total increase, therefore, was 6,000 men. In England, he was happy to be able to say, it had been found practicable to diminish the military force to the extent of about 4,000 men, and he did not see at present how any greater reduction could be made. He knew that his hon. friend, the member for Middlesex (Mr. Hume), intended to propose a large reduction; but he hoped his hon. friend, when he made his proposition, would state the specific details of the reduction he contemplated. He could only say, that some reductions had been made by his predecessors in office, that some were now in progress, and that, if much more was not done, it was not for want of an anxious desire to reduce, but because further reductions were found to be impracticable, and inconsistent with the maintenance of the public interest. All he could do was, to take care that a strict control should be kept over the expenditure of the department with which he was connected. In order to secure this, he should take care that that House and the public should be afforded ample means of inquiry into those details which were generally supposed most capable of reduction. The pay and emoluments received by the higher officers in the Army had often been the subject of invidious and unfair observation. The exceptions were frequently stated as the rule; and it was supposed, because it might have happened in one or two cases, that it was constantly the case, that the emoluments of general officers exceeded the fair reward to which they were entitled for services rendered the country. A more unjust conclusion could not be come to. To prove that Government had no desire to withhold anything on this subject, they were willing to refer everything connected with emoluments of officers of a high rank to a Committee up-stairs. The right hon. Gentleman then proceeded to make some observations with regard to the clothing of the Army. He admitted, that this was a proper case for inquiry, and that the present system should be sifted to the bottom, in order that it might in future be placed on a footing creditable to the Army and beneficial to the public interests. As to the pay and emoluments of general officers, he thought everything connected with that branch of the service would be better considered by a Select Committee up-stairs, than by a Committee in that House. Though he was willing to submit the subject to a Committee, he begged not to be understood as assenting to that course because he did not fully appreciate the claims of the higher officers of the Army upon the justice and liberality of the country. The right hon. Gentleman concluded by moving, "that a sum of 3,168,216*l.* be granted to his Majesty, to defray the expenses of his Majesty's land forces at home and abroad, from the 1st of April, 1833, till the 31st of March, 1834 (both days inclusive)."

Mr. *Hume* observed, that the Committee had not only to inquire into the number of troops which it might be deemed expedient or necessary to employ, but also into the means and capabilities of the country, and what number of troops it could afford to maintain. He would state the grounds of his opposition to the present grant, and leave the Committee to judge how far it was expedient to persist in it. In the first place, then, he must observe, that the 89,000 men set down in the present estimate, formed part only of the establishment for whose support the 3,168,000*l.* was demanded. There were other items included in that sum which were for the maintenance of establishments which were unnecessarily kept up. Of the 3,168,000*l.* there was a sum of 60,000*l.* for extra allowances; another of 63,000*l.* for the expense of the recruiting service, and 110,000*l.* for the Chatham dépôt, and other contingencies, which might be (if not abolished altogether) at least materially reduced. With regard, also, to the number of troops, he considered that, of the 89,000 the Life Guards formed too great a proportion when compared with former periods; and the expenses of the Cavalry, as well as the proportion of that class of troops, was much greater than it had formerly been. As for the grant made for the especial maintenance of the house-hold troops, he must observe that wherever any control existed in other countries over the expenditure of the Government for the military, there was no instance of a sum of money being granted for that purpose of which no account was furnished to the public; and in this case there was no audit of the money paid for the household troops, which there ought to be. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would reform this error, and lay those accounts before Parliament, in order that, if, as he heard was the case, the disbursement of this money was particularly economical, the other branches of the service might be benefited by the circumstance, and if not, that some Reform might be introduced in its management. The principal error in the present army arrangement was, however, to be attributed to the mode in which the regiments had been reduced in the number of rank and file, whilst a full complement of officers had been retained for each. He, therefore, should move for such a reduction as would lessen the number of regiments by fifteen, the men composing which could be drafted into other regiments to complete their number, and thus a great proportion of unnecessary officers would be got rid of. He should also comprise in the reduction on the present grant, which he intended to move, a certain proportion of the items included in the term "contingencies;" for instance, 60,000*l.* for the recruiting service, an establishment wholly unnecessary, now that so many able-bodied men were roaming round the country, glad to get service any where. By this means the extensive staff of the recruiting service might be at once reduced, and the money saved. Another item, and one, too, which was a source of great jealousy to other troops, was the 6,000*l.* granted for the annual expense of the table of the Light Dragoon Guards at St. James's. He would have their allowance put, in this respect, on the same footing as all the other regimental messes throughout the service. He also objected to the items charged for law expenses, and for the distribution of Bibles amongst the troops—the latter, because he doubted the application of the volume amongst the soldiery. Of the item 120,000*l.*, charged as contingent expenses, a great part might be saved, in his opinion, These, however, were not the only reductions he hoped to see effected. The whole military force of the empire was greater now than it was in 1822, 1823, or 1824. In 1821 the troops did not exceed 81,000; in 1822 they were reduced to 68,000; in 1823, they were 69,000; and in 1824, their amount was 73,000 men. In 1825 they were again raised, and he would, therefore, moot the question, whether even taking the disturbed state of Ireland into consideration, there was any necessity for so large an increase of troops as 89,419 exhibited over the numbers of the years he had just cited. The average expenditure of these years was 2,609,000*l.* whilst, the sum now demanded was 3,168,000*l.* an increase of 559,000*l.*, or, in other words, of 2*l.* per cent above those years. At a time like the present, when all classes groaned under the pressure of taxation, was it not the properest way to inquire into the means of affording relief by reducing the establishments of the country? And, if so, the present was the fittest opportunity for commencing the work of retrenchment. It was not fair to the Ministry for the House to vote for the repeal of the Malt-tax, and yet to refuse them the means of sparing that impost by continuing to support such extravagant grants of public money. If he were asked by the right hon. Secretary for the details of his reductions, he would say that England, instead of 40,000 men, ought to have but 20,000; and that the colonies also had double the number of troops they required. The Motion, therefore, which he felt it his duty to make, as an Amendment upon the Resolution before the Committee, was to effect a reduction of 19,000 men; or, in other words, that, instead of the sum of 3,168,216*l.*, the sum of 2,888,720*l.* be inserted, thus cutting off 279,496*l.* exactly six months' pay of the number of troops he objected to, as a surplus upon the average number of troops maintained in the years 1822, 1823, and 1824.

Sir *Henry Hardinge* could assure the Committee, that it was not his intention to prevent his right hon. friend from taking as early a vote as possible, but he thought he could not remain silent after the speech of the hon. Gentleman, the member for Middlesex. He thought it preposterous to make the reduction proposed—a reduction, in short of 19,000 men. Looking to the circumstances in which the country was placed, he felt assured that the Committee would not accede to the Amendment proposed; and for his own part he would support the Resolution as proposed. The hon. Member had gone over the details of years past; he had taken, among others, the year 1823; but, in doing this, he had forgotten to state what had been the expense incurred by the public by the alternation of reductions, and increase from year to year. These alternations had been productive of very heavy expense to the country. He could show by details that, in the year 1820, there had been an addition of 110,000 veterans made to the army on account of the disturbances in England; in 1821, these men were disbanded; in 1822, a great reduction of 21,414 men took place; in 1823 and 1824, 4,560 infantry or six battalions, were raised. So in successive years similar changes had been effected, and what was the consequence? Why, the soldiers were pensioned, and, being pensioned, they were not brought back into active service. When he had the honour of holding office it was considered that if the expense of these alterations from reduction to increase had not been incurred, there would have been a saving to the country sufficient to have maintained 5,000 additional men. He believed that a calculation was made at the time which went to prove that, out of every thirty-six men, fifteen were pensioned. He merely rose to say, that the mode proposed by the hon. Member would prove most expensive to the country. The hon. member for Middlesex had maintained that by diminishing the number of regiments a great amount would be saved in the pay of the officers, but this he (Sir Henry Hardinge) denied; and, in confirmation of his own opinion, he would cite the evidence which had been given before the finance Committee. The gallant General defended the establishment of military dépôts. The troops sent out to the colonies were the most healthy persons, amongst whom the mortality (since regular dèpôts had been established) was in many cases less than it was in home service. As to the objections of the hon. member for Middlesex relative to the recruiting service, he would contend, that it would be bad policy to allow regiments to be weakened by being compelled to keep up detachments to recruit for them. He should not have troubled the House further, but, that having seen a report in a public newspaper which described a servant of the Crown as having drawn the attention of persons to the reduction which had been made by his Majesty's present Government, he trusted the Committee would pardon him if he contradicted a statement which had been made. He would beg to advert to what was the state of things when he left office, and what was the fact in the present year. When he left the War-office, in the year 1830 the cost of the effective of the army was 3,370,558*l.*; in the present year it was 3,537,914*l.*; showing an increase on the present year of 167,356*l.* The non-effective of the year 1833, as compared with that of 1830, showed a decrease of 216,496*l.* arising from great mortality in respect to persons receiving pensions, half-pay, and superannuations. Now, deducting from the decrease in the non-effective the increase on the effective, the remaining real decrease would be, in round numbers, about 50,000*l.* The hon. and gallant Officer concluded by saying that he meant to make no invidious distinction or comparisons in regard to what had been done by his Majesty's present Government, because he felt that they had done everything in their power, and they should have his support in reference to this vote.

Sir *Henry Parnell* said, he had heard the statement of the right hon. Secretary at War with great satisfaction, as he drew thence a favourable augury that the service generally would be henceforward gradually, but effectively, put on a reduced scale. He certainly thought with the hon. member for Middlesex, that the establishment was pitched at too high a point, and that the example of other countries had wrongly been taken as a basis by which to regulate the military force of England. The hon. Member, however, had in this instance proceeded upon what he considered to be mistaken notions of economy; for supposing that the amendments proposed by him were agreed to, the House, by voting for the reduction of so many men, would only be disbanding them, and throwing them upon the pension list of the army, from which they could not be recalled to active service. The example of the Duke of Wellington was that which he was particularly anxious to point out as worthy of imitation; for when that noble Duke held office, his only plan of reduction consisted in omitting to fill up the casualties which annually occur in the army, and if these, the average of which was very considerable, were suffered to remain unfilled, the hon. Member's object would be very soon attained. There never yet had been accounts placed before the House of so fair and explicit a nature as would enable that House to control the vast expenditure of these establishments. An improvement of the kind would be of the utmost advantange to the public.

Major *Beauclerk* entreated the present Ministry not to oppose the expression of the public voice now so loudly uttered in favour of extensive and important reduction in our expenditure. Having voted for the reduction of the Malt-tax and Assessed taxes, he should feel it his duty, after this Motion was disposed of, to move that the numbers of the army be reduced 7,000 men. This was far short of the reduction proposed by the hon. member for Middlesex, which he thought went too far, and he believed this moderate reduction would not at all impair the efficiency of the army.

Sir *Matthew White Ridley* said, that, although he was apprehensive he might, in this instance, give a vote little in unison with the present expression of public opinion, he was prepared to resist the reduction proposed by both hon. Members, as tending to diminish too much the efficiency of the service, and support the vote proposed by his Majesty's Ministers.

Major *Handley* thought some saving might be effected in the staff of the army, and also by consolidating together the duties of two officers, one of whom was often capable of performing the duties of both. Many officers in public offices—for instance, at the Horse Guards—filled civil office, and had a command. There were four such, who, besides their offices, actually had regiments, and were so far pluralists.

Sir *John Byng* said, that the pluralists at the Horse Guards would be speedily subjected to the consideration of a Committee appointed to take the subject into their serious consideration. Nothing could be more judicious than the recommendation made by the right hon. Baronet (Sir Henry Parnell), and he hoped his recommendation would be acted upon. In Ireland there was a necessity for an increase of force, and in the state of the Mauritius an increase of force was also necessary.

Lord *Althorp* would not acquiesce in either of the reductions of our military force proposed by the hon. members for Middlesex or for Surrey. They were both of them too large to be safe. The only effectual economy within the reach of Government, at the present period, was that suggested by the right hon. member for Dundee—namely, the putting an end to the recruiting for the army. At present his Majesty's Government did not feel it safe or expedient to reduce the army; but if an oppportunity should arise during the present year, when it might be deemed proper, he assured the Committee that opportunity would be embraced by Government, and the reduction would be attempted in the mode proposed by the right hon. member for Dundee. That project had been adopted by the Government of the Duke of Wellington to a great extent, and with considerable success. Indeed it was the only mode of doing it safely. It was the wish of the Government to make the reduction as quickly as possible, provided the effectiveness of the force was not impaired. His right hon. friend would propose a Committee on the subject, to which he would accede, and he hoped the result would be satisfactory to the country.

Mr. *Lennard* said, that, as the Government did not seem disposed to pursue on this subject the plans of economy which they had recommended when out of office, he should feel himself obliged to vote with the hon. member for Middlesex. The public expected great and extensive reductions in the public departments. The more he was disposed to maintain faith with the public creditor, the more was he determined to enforce economy, when practicable, in every department.

Mr. *Briscoe* said, he should not be doing his duty if he gave a silent vote. The question now at issue was, not a reduction of force, but a reduction of expense. If the Government would have a reduced expenditure in the military establishments of the country, they could relieve the people from the House and Window-duties. He was compelled the other night to give a most reluctant vote; but he could now tell his Majesty's Government that unless they reduced the expenditure of the country, that House and the Government would lose the confidence of the country. This was his honest opinion, and therefore it was that he had fearlessly stated it.

Mr. *Hodges* felt objections to the proposed reduction of the hon. member for Middlesex as too extensive, and likely to be attended with great expense on the score of superannuations, incidental to his plan. He should, for these reasons, support the vote proposed by his Majesty's Ministers.

Mr. *Hume* said, that the object of his Motion had been misunderstood. He did not want any reduction of the number of men, if the reduction of the expenditure could be otherwise accomplished. He wished to see the surplus officers of the blues and of other regiments reduced; and to see the expenditure reduced in every possible manner. He confessed that he was at a loss to understand the principle of the vote of the hon. member for West Kent. If that hon. Gentleman allowed that the whole country desired a reduction of the public expenditure, why not set about it at once? The hon. Member had voted the other night for reducing the taxes. Now it appeared to him, that it was not acting fairly towards his Majesty's Ministers to vote for reducing the taxes, and not to vote for reducing the expenditure.

Mr. *O'Connell* was in favour of the reduction proposed by his hon. friend. It was singular that in England, with a population of 16,000,000, not more than 12,000 infantry were required; whilst in Ireland, with a population of only 8,000,000, 20,000 infantry were now to be voted. With the English gentlemen this might be a reason why they would support the estimate. For the last twelve months half the 20,000 were employed in enforcing tithe, and they would not have their amusement for nothing; but with him it was a decided reason why he would support the reduction of the hon. member for Middlesex.

The Committee divided on the Amendment: Ayes 70; Noes 238—Majority 168.

List of the AYES.

ENGLAND.
Aglionby, H. A.
Attwood, T.
Bainbridge, E. T.
Beauclerk, Major
Bolling, W.
Briggs, R.
Briscoe, J. I.
Buckingham, J. S.
Buller, C.
Clay, W.
Ewart, W.
Faithfull, G.
Fellowes, H. A. W.
Fellowes, Hon. N.
Fielden, J.
Gaskell, D.
Grote, G.
Guest, J. J.
Guise, Sir B. W.
Hawes, B.
Hawkins, J. H.
Humphery, J.
Jervis, J.
Lennard, T. B.
Lister, E. C.
Lloyd, J. H.
Methuen, P.
Morrison, J.
Palmer, General
Parrott, J.
Philips, M.
Potter, R.
Pryse, P.
Robinson, G. R.
Romilly, J.
Romilly, E.
Staveley, J. K.
Strutt, E.
Thicknesse, R.
Thompson, Ald.
Trelawney, W. L. S.
Turner, W.
Vincent, Sir F.
Walter, J.
Warburton, H.
Wason, R.
Watkins, J. L.
Wood, G. W.

SCOTLAND.
Gillon, W. D.
Maxwell, Sir J.
Maxwell, J.
Oswald, J.
Wallace, R.

IRELAND.
Bellew, R. M.
Blake, M.
Finn, W. F.
Fitzgerald, T.
Fitzsimon, C.
Lalor, P.
O'Brien, C.
O'Connell, D.
O'Connell, M.
O'Connell, C.
O'Connell, J.
O'Connell, Morgan
O'Connor, F.
Roche W.
Ruthven, E. S.
Ruthven, E.
Vigors, N. A.

TELLER.
Hume, J.

Paired off.
Molesworth, Sir W.

Vote agreed to and the House resumed.

AGRICULTURE, TRADE, MANUFACTURES, AND SHIPPING.] Lord *Althorp*, in rising to move for two Select Committees of Inquiry into the agriculture, trade, manufacture, and shipping of the United Kingdom, said, he was aware that there existed a very great wish for inquiry; and in compliance with that desire, he thought it more proper to have two Committees than one. He should, therefore, move first the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the state of the agriculture and the agricultural labourer throughout the kingdom, and of another Committee to inquire into the state of the trade, manufactures, and shipping of the United Kingdom. He thought more benefit would result from inquiry in this way than from a General Committee to inquire into the distress of the country. He owned, however, that he should do wrong if he led the House to expect that any great public benefit would arise from the labours of these Committees. Their appointment would have the effect of showing, that the expectations of the country on the subject of a redress of grievances in the way desired were impossible. There was a question whether it would be advisable to mix up an inquiry into the shipping interests with that connected with the mercantile and commercial concerns of the country. Now, he would observe, that it was most desirable the shipping should be considered as closely connected with the manufactures of the nation. With the commerce of the country, the shipping was certainly connected, although, upon some subjects, there might be some degree of rivalry. He thought that, upon the whole, the question connected with the shipping interests would be better considered in a Committee appointed to inquire into the manufactures and commerce of the country, than if it were inquired into alone; but if the gentlemen connected with the interests in question, found that the subject was not fully inquired into, there was nothing to prevent another Committee being appointed to inquire particularly into the shipping affairs. The noble Lord concluded by moving, "that a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the state of agriculture, and of the persons employed in it."

Motion agreed to, and Committee appointed.

Lord Althorp moved the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the state of the Trade, Manufactures, and Shipping of the United Kingdom.

Mr. *George F. Young* said, that the laws relating to the shipping of the country were of such a nature, as to prevent the interests of ships from being mixed up with either the manufactures or the commerce of the country. Although he admitted that the commerce and the shipping of the country were in some degree connected, yet still there were points in which they differed most materially. He could assure the noble Lord that the proposed inquiry, as far as it related to the shipping of the country, would be perfectly unsatisfactory to those connected with that branch of industry.

Lord *Althorp* said, that, if the business were not fairly conducted in the Committee, it would be then well to have a separate one for the shipping interest alone; but he thought the inquiry would be properly conducted.

Motion agreed to, and Committee appointed.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, May 6, 1833.

MINUTES.] Petitions presented. By the Earls of LONSDALE, HARROWBY, and RODEN, by the Bishop of GLOUCESTER, and by Lord BEXLEY, from several Places,—for a Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By the Dukes of WELLINGTON, RICHMOND, and NORFOLK, by the Marquess of SLIGO, by the Earls of RODEN, ROSEBERY, and CARLISLE, by Lord SUFFIELD, and by the Bishop of LONDON, from a great many Places,—against Slavery.—By the Duke of WELLINGTON, from Bath, for a further Inquiry into the State of the Slaves.—By the Bishops of GLOUCESTER and LONDON, by the Earl of RADNOR, and by Lord WHARNCLIFFE, from Gloucester, Shepperton, Tonbridge, and Yeole, for a Revision and Amendment of the Sale of Beer Act.—By the Bishops of CHICHESTER, and LONDON, and by the Duke of SOMERSET, from several Places,—against a Clause in the Local Jurisdiction Bill.—By the Duke of GORDON, from Forque and its Vicinity, for an Inquiry into the Agricultural Distress, and for Relief.—By the Earl of HARROWBY, from the Coach Proprietors, on the Lines of Road between London, Worcester, Hereford, and Gloucester, against granting Acts for the making of Rail-roads.—By the Earl of ROSEBERY, from Dumfries, against the Exclusive Rights and Privileges enjoyed at present by the Royal Burghs in Scotland.—By the Bishop of GLOUCESTER, from the Clergy of the Diocese of Gloucester, and from the Deanery of Stow; and by the Earl of RODEN, from three Places in Ireland,—against the proposed Measure of Church Reform for Ireland.—By the Earl of RODEN, from Kilkenny, for an Alteration in the present System of Church Patronage in Scotland; and from Limerick, to give Poor Laws to Ireland.—By the Duke of HAMILTON, from the Political Union of Glasgow, for the Extension of Trial by Jury to the Inferior Courts in Scotland.

WIMBLEDON RECTORY.] Lord *Lyndhurst* presented a Petition from the inhabitants of Wimbledon, complaining that the Tithes of their parish belonged to the Dean and Chapter of Worcester; that the Curacy, which was a very old one, was worth only 40*l.* a-year; and that it had never been increased, though the tithes had gone on increasing till they were of a very considerable amount. The petitioners also stated that the Dean and Chapter had suffered the Rectory House to go to ruin, and the Curate was obliged to hire lodgings at a considerable expense. The noble Lord said, he had no knowledge of these circumstances himself, but the petition was signed by some very respectable men, and, therefore, he thought it his duty to present it.

The Bishop of *Rochester* was not aware that the noble and learned Lord meant to present the petition to-day, or he would have come fully prepared to state the particulars of the case. However, what he knew on the subject would, he hoped, satisfy their Lordships, that the Dean and Chapter were not to blame in this matter. The fact was, they did not get a farthing of the tithes in question. They were, it was true, the property of the Chapter, but they had been let to a noble Lord, a Member of that House (Earl Spencer) and his family for upwards of a 100 years. All that the Dean and Chapter got was a quit rent of 40*l.* a-year. At the same time it was not correct to say, that there was one curate with 40*l.* a-year; there were two curates, and each had 40*l.* a-year. He had been a member of the Chapter of Worcester for five years and had never received one farthing from the tithes of Wimbledon; whatever money was received was expended on the repairs of the Cathedral. The property was let on a lease of lives, and till the lives fell in, the Dean and Chapter could make no alteration.

Petition laid on the Table.

POOR LAWS (IRELAND).] The Duke of *Sussex* presented a Petition from the Freemen and Electors of the City of London, praying for some legislative provision for the poor of Ireland. It was signed by the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and ten citizens, according to an old custom of the City of London, and he mentioned this to show that there was no irregularity in the Petition. Had he received this petition a few days before, he should have felt himself called upon to enter at some length into this important subject, but the Motion which had lately been made in another place, and the Commission of Inquiry which was to be issued made him think that it would be very unadvisable then to raise any discussion on the question. In many points he agreed with the petitioners—on some he had doubts; but on the importance of the subject, as it concerned the tranquillity and best interests of both countries, he had none. It was chiefly in the interest of Ireland that the improvement was demanded, but also in the interest of England, and he certainly was convinced that what benefitted one part of the empire must be advantageous to the other part. He would not say any more than to move that the petition be read at length.

Petition read accordingly. His Royal Highness moved that it be laid on the Table.

The Duke of *Hamilton* thought some measure was necessary, and if it was required for England, it was required tenfold for Scotland. Scotland had borne long and patiently the burthen of supporting a numerous body of the Irish poor, and it was high time that something should be done. He believed that in the county of Lanark alone there were 40,000 destitute Irish; and he believed, to make out the whole number which were in Scotland, he might add another cipher. He did not wish to wound the feelings of any Irish nobleman, but he must say, the Irish who emigrated, were the most destitute, the most degraded set of people he had ever beheld. The influx of so many Irish into Scotland, lowered wages, and augmented all the burthens on the land. Let it not be supposed that there was no Poor rate in Scotland. In the West of Scotland they had Poor-rates, and Poor-rates that were felt to be burthensome. Besides the Irish who came over to Scotland only to beg, there came many who had been commercially employed, and many of them had to be supported.

The Earl of *Wicklow* had not intended to trouble the House with any observations, if the noble Duke had not set him the example. He was, however, not very sorry that the subject should have been started, for as the operations of Commissioners were generally rather tardy, it was not very likely that the Commission mentioned by the illustrious Duke would bring forward any facts or lay any information before the House in time for the House to act upon this Session; and it was, therefore, as well that this important subject should be touched upon now. It was a question which had begun to excite a very great sensation, amounting almost to clamour among the people, for whose information the periodical Press was continually trumping up lamentable accounts of the state of Ireland, of nightly and daily outrages. This state of things in a country so intimately connected with this, governed by almost the same laws, and partly inhabited by descendants from Englishmen, naturally excited very great surprise in the minds of the people in general, and they were, therefore, ready to believe any account that might be given them in explanation, and therefore, accepted as such the assertions, that all these calamities were caused by the absence of Poor-rates in that country. There seemed to be a very great complaint of the influx of the Irish poor into this country; but they never heard any of these complaints in harvest time, when the English farmers derived much benefit from the service and labour of the Irish emigrant. However, great and manifold as were the evils of the system of Poor-laws in this country, yet, if it could be shown that the introduction of this system, bad and vicious as it was, into Ireland, would bring the Irish labourer into a similar condition with the English labourer, he would decidedly support it, but he was perfectly convinced that it would have a directly contrary effect. The evils which would result from it it was impossible to foresee. If the petitioners wished to do good to Ireland, who so capable of doing it as themselves, possessing, as the various companies of the City of London did, enormous property in the north of Ireland?

The Earl of *Haddington* fully concurred in what had fallen from the noble Duke. He was well acquainted with the west of Scotland, and he knew that all the populous and great towns, there complained precisely in the terms made use of by the noble Duke. There was no complaint made against the Irish labourers—it was against the paupers who came over and were wholly dependant upon the Scotch and English for their support.

Lord *Ellenborough* said, the Irish who came over to Scotland, although they might lower the price of labour, contributed by their labour, to the wealth of the country. They were as fully entitled to relief as any Scotchman born.

The Duke of *Hamilton* did not complain of the Irish poor who visited Scotland to assist in getting in the harvest, or for the purpose of giving their labour otherwise; what he complained of was, that numbers of the poorer classes were sent over from Ireland, their passage paid, and rewards received by them from a Committee to induce them to emigrate to Scotland. Such persons brought their wives, or those whom they called their wives, along with them, and whilst the men worked, the women begged, and finally the men went away, leaving the women and an increased population behind them.

Petition laid on the Table.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, May 6, 1833.

Minutes.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of Mr. Dunlop, an Account of the Number of Gallons of Wine on which Duty has been paid for Home Consumption in the United Kingdom, in the year ending January 5th, 1833.—On the Motion of Lord Sandon, an Account of the Number of Pilots, and of the total Amount of Pilotage received by them for the Port of Liverpool, in the three years preceding the year 1796, and the same for the three years succeeding that year: the same for the years 1821, 1822, and 1823, before the general introduction of Steam Vessels, and the same for the years 1830, 1831, and 1832.

Bills. Read a third time:—Tile Duties; Personal Estates; Cotton Duties.

Petitions presented. By Mr. Faithfull, from the Scotch Metropolitan Union, for Abrogating the Edinburgh Annuity Tax.—By Mr. A. Pelham, from Lindsay, Lincoln, against any Alteration in the Corn Laws.—By Mr. M. A. Taylor, from Sible Hedingham, for a Repeal of the Assessed Taxes.—By General Sharpe, from Dumfries, for Removing the Restrictions upon the Jurisdiction of the Sheriffs of Counties (Scotland).—By Mr. Pease, from Lisburn, for further Mitigation of the Criminal Law.—By Lord G. Lennox, Sir Eardley Wilmot, and Messrs. W. Duncombe, Methuen, R. Shawe, Nicholl, and Talbot, from several Places,—for the Repeal or Alteration of the Sale of Beer Act.—By Mr. Dillwynn, from Glamorganshire; and by Sir Rowland Hill, and Lord Henniker, from the County of Salop, and from Hoxne,—for a Repeal of the Malt Tax.—By Mr. Hall, Mr. Pinney, and Mr. Pease, from Lyme Regis, St. Ives, and Ripon,—for the Correction of Corporation Abuses.—By Mr. Alderman Wood, from the City of London, for giving Poor Laws to Ireland; and by Mr. Pease, from Mountmelic, to the same effect.—By General Sharpe, from Kirkmahoo; and by Mr. R. Stewart, from Haddington,—for an Alteration in the present System of Church Patronage in Scotland.—By Mr. Pease, from Darlington, for Lessening the Duty on Marine Insurances.—By Mr. Alderman Wood, from the Company of Vintners, against the Justices of the Peace Bill; and from the Salesmen and Venders in Covent Garden Market, for Repealing the Restrictions imposed on Coffee-house Keepers.—By Mr. Yelverton, Lord Eastnor, Colonel Maberley, and Mr. George Vernon, from several Places,—for a Repeal of the House and Window Tax.—By Sir H. Verney, from Jedburgh and Borrowstourness, for a Repeal of the Duty on Stamped Receipts.—By Mr. Cutlar Fergusson, from the Procurators before the Sheriffs Court of Fife, for giving Jurisdiction to the Sheriffs for Counties for the Administration of Bankrupt Law.—By Mr. R. Shawe, from Halesworth, for Amending the Law of Debtor and Creditor, and from the Fishermen of Lowestoft, against Legislative Enactments, for the Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By Colonel Conolly, and Lord Lowther, from three Places, against Church Temporalities (Ireland) Bill.—By Lord Sandon, from Liverpool, for giving Poor Laws to Ireland.—By Lord G. Bentinck, and Mr. Alderman Wood, from three Places, for Relief to the Dissenters in respect to Marriages, Burials, and Registration.—By Dr. Nicholls, and Mr. C. R. M. Talbot, from Bridgend, Neath, and Glamorganshire,—against Removing the Glamorgan Assizes.—By Lord Sandon, from Liverpool, for Removing the Civil Disabilities of the Jews; and from the Proprietors of the Theatre Royal Liverpool, in favour of the Dramatic Performances Bill.—By Colonel Conolly, and Mr. Fitzgerald, from Donegal and Dundalk, for an Alteration of the Grand Jury Laws.—By Mr. Fitzgerald, from Wexford, for Substituting Solemn Affirmations in lieu of Oaths.—By Colonel Conolly, from the Officers of the Gaol of Lifford, for Enabling Grand Juries to grant Superannuations to Prison Officers in Ireland.—By Mr. Dawson, Lord George Lennox, Sir Eardley Wilmot, Mr. Anderson Pelham, Mr. Fort, Colonel Torrens, Mr. Alderman Wood, Mr. Bingham Baring, Mr. Yelverton, Mr. Pease, Mr. Faithfull, Sir A. Agnew, Mr. W. Duncombe, Mr. Fowell Buxton, Mr. Lester, Mr. Methuen, Lord Waterpark, Mr. R. Shawe, Mr. King, Mr. Childers, Mr. Bethel, Mr. Hall, Sir R. Hill, Sir R. Simeon, Colonel Frederick Howard, Mr. Sheppard, Mr. W. A. Williams, Mr. Forester, Lord George Bentinck, Mr. Fenton, Sir George Grey, Mr. Lister, Mr. S. Trelawney, Mr. E. J. Stanley, Mr. Chapman, Mr. Tooke, Mr. Brocklehurst, Mr. C. Talbot, Sir H. Willoughby, Mr. Throckmorton, Mr. Vernon Smith, Mr. Vernon, Sir T. B. Lennard, Colonel Conolly, Lord Viscount Lowther, Mr. Madocks, and Mr. J. Martin, from a very great Number of Places,—against Slavery.—By Mr. Dawson, Sir Eardley Wilmot, Mr. Anderson Pelham, Colonel Torrens, Mr. Bingham Baring, Lord Viscount Molyneux, Mr. Anthony Lefroy, Mr. Pease, Sir A. Agnew, Mr. W. Duncombe, Sir H. Verney, Mr. R. Shawe, Sir R. Simeon, Mr. Addams Williams, Mr. Fenton, Captain Jones, Lord Viscount Eastnor, Mr. Philip Howard, Lord Viscount Sandon, Lord Viscount Clive, Mr. Vernon, Colonel Conolly, and Mr. Maddocks, from a great Number of Places,—for the Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By Mr. O'Connell, from Horley, for the Repeal of the Duty on Malt and Hops.—By Mr. Hodges, from Rolvenden, for Relief to the Agricultural Distress; and by Sir F. Vincent, from two Parishes in St. Alban's, for Adopting such parts of the Lord's Day Observance Bill as may be deemed fit by the House.

Bribery at Elections.] Mr. *Faithfull* presented a Petition from the electors and other inhabitants of Chichester, signed by between 3,000 and 4,000 individuals, complaining that the Reform Act contained no efficient clause for the prevention of bribery and undue influence at elections of Members to serve in Parliament. The petitioners complained in particular of the system of bribery and treating at the last election, and that one of the candidates on the hustings refused to pledge himself not to be a party to the proceedings,—that large sums of money were consequently expended in the contest, and that, owing to undue influence, many of the electors had been compelled to vote contrary to their consciences. The petitioners concluded by praying for Vote by Ballot, the shortening of the duration of Parliaments, and for a cheap and easy mode for the conviction of candidates guilty of bribery and treating at elections. The hon. Member said, that though he did not take upon himself to state that the allegations in the petition were true, yet he believed them to be so, particularly as the petitioners stated their readiness to prove them on oath; at all events, he was confident that the system prevailed to a great extent elsewhere, and as long as it was permitted to continue, it was a farce to talk of purity of election. If no other individual did so, he should himself submit a proposition to the House on a future day founded on this petition, in the prayer of which he heartily concurred.

Lord *Arthur Lennox* said, that he felt indebted to the hon. member for Brighton for the courtesy he had shown him in apprising him of his intention of presenting the petition from Chichester on that day, as it afforded him an opportunity of replying to those parts of it which might seem to cast an imputation on him. That considerable sums of money had been expended by candidates for Chichester, to promote their return, within the memory of the petitioners, was most perfectly true; but when he informed the House that there had been no less than five severely contested elections for that place within the last seven years, he was sure they would not be surprised that such should have been the case; neither would they be astonished if, in the heat of these contests there should have been an unusual demand for a beverage, the consumption of which it was a favourite project of a late Parliament, and he might add too, a favourite project of a Reformed House of Commons, to promote; but when it was asserted that a system of beer-drinking and treating still continued to prevail in Chichester, he denied the assertion in the most positive and unqualified terms, so far as it might be considered as relating to him, or to any of his friends. He denied also, on his own behalf that undue influence had been used, or that any elector was ever compelled to vote for him contrary to his inclination or contrary to a promise previously given to any other candidate. He was proud to say, that he owed his seat not to bribery or corruption of any kind, not to undue influence, but to the free and unbiassed suffrages of as independent and high-minded a constituency as any in the United Kingdom. With regard to the prayer of the petitioners he dissented from that part of it which called upon the House to shorten the duration of Parliaments, and to enact that in future the votes of electors might be taken by Ballot but having as strong a feeling against bribery as any man he most cordially concurred in that part of it which asked the House to enact a law for the sure punishment, and easy and cheap conviction, of candidates guilty of that offence. He had felt it his duty to make these few observations, not only in justice to himself, but also in justice to those to whose good opinion he owed his seat; but when he looked at the names attached to the petition, and saw amongst them many supporters of his own, he could not believe that the imputations contained in the petition could be aimed at him.

Petition to lie on the Table.

CHURCH TEMPORALITIES (IRELAND).] Lord Althorp having moved the Order of the Day for the second reading of the Irish Church Temporalities Bill.

Mr. *Goulburn* stated, that he observed in the 16th section of the Bill a declaration that his Majesty had placed that part of the hereditary revenues of the Crown derived from the Archbishoprics and Bishoprics to be abolished, at the disposal of Parliament. He (Mr. Goulburn) had looked over the records of the House in order to discover any message from the Crown to that effect, but had been unable to find any. Perhaps, however, such a message had been delivered, and he begged to ask the noble Lord for information on the subject?

Lord *Althorp* said, it was true that there was no specific message such as that alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman; but that he did not conceive any such specific message to be necessary. The subject had been referred to by his Majesty in his Speech on the opening of Parliament, and his assent had been officially signified in the Committee.

Mr. *Wynn* said, that a distinct message from the Crown was indispensable before the House could proceed to legislate with reference to any of the hereditary revenues of the Crown.

Lord *Althorp* regretted, that this objection had not been raised at the time the former objection was raised to the mode of proceeding. He thought, however, that the passage in the Speech from the Throne at the commencement of the pressent Session, in which his Majesty observed, "your attention will also be directed to the state of the Church, more particularly as regards the temporalities and the maintenance of the clergy," was quite sufficient. His Majesty, in that passage, called upon the House to enter into the consideration of the subject.

Mr. *Wynn* said, that the Bill was printed on Tuesday morning, and proposed to be read a second time on Thursday, and in the cursory glance which he gave to it under those circumstances, it could not be expected that he could discover all the blunders in it. He discovered one error which was fatal. The error now brought to light certainly had not struck him, but it was not the less important.

Mr. *Goulburn* remarked, that this was no trifling question. It was, whether that House should enter into the consideration of the disposal of the hereditary revenues of the Crown without a previous message from the King, intimating that he placed those revenues at their disposal. The revenue derived in the case in question, was as much the hereditary revenue of the Crown as the revenue from the woods and forests. That the noble Lord was aware, that the House would not presume to interfere with the latter unless upon an express message, was evident from the fact that the noble Lord had himself, that very evening, delivered a message upon the subject. And be it recollected, that the message which the noble Lord had brought down respecting the woods and forests went only to inquire into their state and condition; how much more necessary was a message when the proposition was to destroy a part of the hereditary revenue of the Crown for ever? What part of the revenue of the Crown would be safe if such a course were permitted? Why should not any of the hon. Gentlemen behind him get up and propose a measure to dispose of some other part of the revenue of the Crown? The noble Lord, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and as sworn to protect the revenues of the Crown, ought not to press forward a Bill of this description without a preliminary message from the Crown. For the House of Commons to invade the revenues of the Crown without such a message was a violation of the principles of the Constitution.

Sir *Robert Inglis* expressed his concurrence in the sentiments of his right hon. friend. It was distinctly stated in the Bill, that his Majesty had placed the revenues in question at the disposal of the House; and how could they proceed to read the Bill a second time, and sanction that assertion, unless they had that assent formally signified?

Mr. *Hume* suggested, that some plan should be adopted of embodying the Rules and Orders of the House in a distinct and intelligible shape, so that every Member might be able, without difficulty, to make himself acquainted with them, instead of trusting to the research and experience of one or two particular Members. Certainly the rules of that House were not mere matters of form, and, by not following them, public business was continually delayed or risk was run of delaying it. Such a digest as he proposed had been made of the rules and orders of the Congress of the United States; and he must repeat, that it would be very convenient to have such a digest of the rules of that House.

Mr. *Matthias Attwood* said, that the Bill was based upon an assertion which was totally unfounded. The 32nd clause of the Bill stated, that his Majesty had been pleased to signify his intention to place at the disposal of Parliament his interest in the temporalities and custody of certain Archbishoprics and Bishoprics, whereas his Majesty had been graciously pleased to do no such thing. They ought not to proceed on an allegation void of truth.

Mr. *Secretary Stanley* said, it was true that there had been no specific message from his Majesty on this particular provision of the Bill which was now referred to; but it was equally manifest that in the Speech from the Throne, and in the subsequent recommendation to that House, a general sanction was given by his Majesty to the principle of the Bill. In the Speech from the Throne the attention of the House was called to the state of the Church, more particularly as regarded its temporalities and the maintenance of the clergy, and to the question whether the revenues of the

Church might not admit of a more equitable and judicious distribution. And it was upon his Majesty's recommendation that those Resolutions were introduced upon which the Bill was subsequently formed. It, therefore, appeared to him quite clear, that his Majesty had sanctioned the principle of the Bill. It might, perhaps, be expedient that, before the House came to the consideration of the specific clause, a more distinct message should come down in reference to it. Upon this he offered no opinion; but, however that might be, he did not think there was any thing in the case to vitiate what had already been done, or to preclude the House from proceeding with the second reading. He could not help remarking, that this second objection, after such a lapse of time, upon a mere point of form, conveyed the idea that there might be considerable reluctance on the part of the opponents of the Bill to deal with its substance.

Sir *Robert Peel* said, that the occurrence was clearly an oversight. The noble Lord must know as well as he did, that there ought to have been the same message with regard to this Bill as there had been this evening relative to the Woods and Forests. As to the recommendation from his Majesty, that did not affect the question, for the right hon. Gentleman must be aware that that recommendation would have been equally necessary if there were no revenues of the Crown to be resigned.

Lord *John Russell* observed, that there was no more necessity for a specific message before the second than before the first reading.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, that the King had signified in three different ways his sanction of the Bill—first, in the Speech from the Throne—next, in his recommendation to that House—and, thirdly, by the circumstance of the measure being brought forward by his Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Mr. *Cutlar Fergusson* said, that if this objection were valid, a great deal of time must be lost, because it would be necessary to begin again. It would be time enough to reject the clause in the Committee, if it appeared that it was not properly authorised.

Mr. *Shaw* said, it was wrong that the Bill should have been read a first time without the necessary Message; but that was the fault of those who brought the measure forward, and not of the House, who, at that time, knew nothing of the contents of the Bill. The House, however, would now be adopting that error, if, being aware of the circumstances, it suffered the Bill to be read a second time.

The Order of the Day read.

Lord Althorp moved the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. *Goulburn* reiterated his objection to the proceeding, and said, that the precedent might be used hereafter to deprive the King of his remaining rights. He would ask the Speaker whether it was consistent with the orders of the House to read a Bill a second time containing an allegation relative to the conduct of the Crown which was not correct.

The *Speaker* said, the question appeared to him to be whether the message would be in time, between the second reading and the Committee, or whether it ought to be before the second reading. If it ought to precede the second reading, it appeared to him that it ought equally to have preceded the first. If the House were authorized to deal with the principle of the Bill at the first reading, whatever may be its contents, they could not be altered before the details came to be considered in Committee. If the House should go into Committee without the message, that part of the Bill to which the message should refer would not be within its jurisdiction. If the House considered that there had been a sufficient sanction for the first reading, in his opinion there was also a sufficient sanction for the second; but if there were sufficient for both, still it did not follow that there was sufficient for the House to deal with the Bill in Committee.

Question put, that the Bill be read a second time.

Mr. *Shaw*, having to oppose the Motion of the noble Lord, "that the Irish Church Temporalities Bill be now read a second time," was anxious to guard himself from the imputation of being opposed to all Reform—of being hostile to such alterations as time and circumstances might have rendered wise or necessary, as well as from the imputation of feeling any indisposition to correct abuses or adopt improvements which might, according to the language and professed objects of the Bill, "conduce to the advancement of religion, and to the efficiency, preeminence, and stability of the united Church of England

and Ireland." In order to come more directly to the points upon which he was at issue with the Bill, he would clear the way of some which he would not then dispute. The first was the abolition of Vestry cess. He should be quite prepared to maintain upon principle the justice of making all the subjects of a state chargeable for the support of the national religion, but under the present peculiar circumstances of Ireland, his only complaint on the subject was, that his Majesty's Government had not given to the clergy in Ireland the opportunity of voluntarily taking upon themselves this charge, which he believed they were in general willing to do for the sake of removing a specious pretext for discontent, and even the appearance of any impediment to their spiritual usefulness. Then as to the augmentation of small livings—the dissolution as far as it was practicable of unions, and the enforcement of residence—these were objects which, so far as they could be promoted by the Bill, all had his cordial support. But there were two leading principles of the measure to which he never could assent, and these would oblige him to conclude by moving as an Amendment that the Bill be read a second time that day six months. He meant, first, the diversion of Church property to uses merely secular; and secondly, the tendency, in various respects, of the Bill, to lower the authority and diminish the influence of the Protestant established religion in Ireland. That which related to the invasion of the property of the Church, was an objection general in its nature; for if the principle were once admitted, it must shake the foundation and render insecure the possession of all property, lay as well as ecclesiastical. His Majesty's Ministers, indeed, contended that applying to the general purposes of the State, the profits arising from the proposed change in Bishops' leases was no infringement of the rights of property; but this was a sophistry unworthy of them. The question should at once be decided whether or not Church property was to be held sacred; and if they were to spoliate it, then let them openly profess that intention, and not attempt to cover it under the special plea of a pretended act of justice. He would ask the noble Lord (Lord Althorp) had not the proposition received the same construction by both sides of the House, one supporting, and the other opposing it, because it did involve the principle that the revenues of the Church were applicable to other than ecclesiastical purposes? But the Act of 10th and 11th Charles 1st was conclusive on the subject; its title was, "an Act for the Preservation of the Inheritance and Rights belonging to the Church and Persons Ecclesiastical"—stating as well the fact that the inheritance did belong to the Church, as that the object of the Legislature was to preserve, and, as it further stated in the preamble, to continue that inheritance in the Church. And the 4th section gives as the reason for non-alienation, that the successors of the Bishops may not be prejudiced—precisely a similar case to an individual settling his property in strict entail—giving certain power to the tenant in life, but limiting them for the benefit of his successors, just as in this case. The fee, as it were, remained in the Church, and each Bishop was to be regarded as the tenant for life; but could any one who read the Statute, who regarded the principle or considered the practice of our laws, suppose it was intended to keep in abeyance an advantage which at any time the state might reserve to itself. The supposition was so monstrous, that it was almost impossible to argue coolly against it. His next objection was, that the spirit which pervaded the Bill was inimical to ecclesiastical authority and influence. The formation of the Board gave the great preponderance to the lay commissioners, being in respect of the permanent commissioners in the proportion of two to one, and so virtually at least in those that were to be appointed by the Lord Lieutenant, three of whom were to be laymen with salaries, having no other duties to perform, opposed to three Bishops, who must have various avocations at a distance from the Board. He objected most strongly to this Board having the power to suspend the appointment of an incumbent to parishes in which service had not been performed for three years. He objected also to the provision that no grant of money should be made for the building of a Church without the subscription of a certain number of Protestants, a condition which in the poorer parishes must operate as an impediment to the spread of the established religion. But upon this point the strongest objection to his mind was the reduction of the number of bishoprics. If a substitute must be found through means of the bishoprics for the Vestry cess, rather let the incomes than the number of the future bishops be reduced—4,000*l.* a year for each of the Bishops, and 6,000*l.* for the Archbishops, would leave a sum of about 40,000*l.* a year applicable to that purpose. He saw no benefit that could arise, and many evils which must, both in an ecclesiastical and political point of view, ensue from the diminution of the number of bishoprics. First, considering the matter in an ecclesiastical point of view, the reduction was in direct opposition to the spirit of the Bill, for the preamble declared that it was to compel residence, to prevent unions, to suppress pluralities; and yet the proposition was, to unite bishoprics, and that in a most unsatisfactory and inconvenient manner. Instead of adhering to the declared principles of the Bill, and ensuring the efficient residence of every Bishop upon his diocese, duties were to be imposed upon them which it would be impossible for them to discharge. It should be remembered that there was a material difference between the duties of the Bishops in Ireland and of the Bishops of England. In England the Archdeacons naturally relieved the Bishops, by performing the annual visitation and other duties, but in Ireland the whole of them were performed by the Bishops. He had always understood that one of the strongest disadvantages Ireland laboured under was having a large number of non-resident proprietors; and yet by this Bill it was proposed to take away no less than ten resident proprietors who had the rank of Peers. And that objection applied to the reduction of the property of the Church generally. There were about two thousand clergymen in Ireland, who received on the average an income of 250*l.* a year; and surely any reduction either in the number or in the income of such a resident gentry must be an injury. He was willing to provide for all Church purposes out of Church property, and to remedy all abuses and to effect all desirable alterations; but he was not willing to consign the reformation of the Church to its known enemies, when it ought to be intrusted only to its friends. Viewing the matter in that way, he objected to the proposition with respect to the fund looked for from the sale of leases. In principle that project was unjustifiable—in practice it would prove a deception. He was convinced that the calculations of the noble Lord would be found most fallacious. Instead of there being a large surplus fund for the use of the Government there would not be more than sufficient to provide for the Vestry-cess. He put it therefore to the noble Lord to say whether he would persevere in a project which could only have the effect of giving a triumph to the enemies of the Church, or whether he would adopt a plan which was equally advantageous with reference to the pecuniary produce, and in accordance with the feelings of the friends of the Church. Surely the object of the noble Lord could not be to throw a sop to senseless clamour —to gratify the hon. member for Middlesex by destroying ten Bishops? Such a number would hardly satisfy the hon. Member; he would be far better pleased to have twenty; and, together with the hon. member for Oldham, would have no manner of objection to have fifty coronets thrown into the bargain. Doubtless the hon. member for Middlesex, if he had them in the mortar of blind superstition and popular folly, would apply the pestle to their destruction *secundum artem.* But if it were possible for the noble Lord to have any such view, let him not imagine that this measure would effect his purpose. If the principles set forth in it were adopted, then the hon. member for Middlesex, and those who thought with him, would never be content till it was fully followed out, and the whole of the property of the Church spoliated. He, therefore, called upon the Government to seek to reform the Church in concert with its friends, and not in compact with its enemies. He firmly believed that if the reformation of the Church of Ireland was left to the hon. member for Middlesex, he would leave it possessed of just as much as was worth nothing, and no more. In fact, the conduct of the hon. member reminded him very much of a case which had come before him a short time since. Two men were charged with a highway robbery, and it appeared that they had plundered the prosecutor of everything, but the prosecutor requested the robbers would return an old umbrella and a bottle of wash which was useful only in a particular trade. The highwaymen having no use for the articles, complied with the request, with perhaps full as much civility as the hon. Member would be disposed to show the Church—but they carried off all that was valuable or profitable to themselves. They had, however, for that offence been transported for their lives, but he feared the dread of no such salutary punishment would stand between the hon. Member and the spoliation of the Church Establishment. He would earnestly entreat his Majesty's Ministers to beware of the course they were pursuing. Let them not think, according to the cant of the present times, that a coercive measure having passed, was a reason for what is termed a remedial one, or that the prospect of a remedial one (even if it were remedial) could be any justification for coercion, if in itself unnecessary. This up-and-down system of the Government had been the bane of Ireland, and he believed that a firm and vigorous administration of the existing laws since the present Ministers had been in office (however ill it might have served other purposes), would have saved the necessity of the Coercive Act, which had occupied in its discussion the greater part of the Session that had passed, and this so called remedial one, which was likely to consume a great part of the remainder. The Ministry were treading very dangerous ground. He would not now detain the House by dwelling on the 5th article of the Act of Union, already so frequently referred to in these debates, but upon this subject he might quote the words of the present Lord Chancellor of Ireland, who, in discussing this question in 1824, observed that 'the Protestant 'establishment of the country he considered necessary for the security of all 'sects; and he thought that there should 'not only be an Established Church but 'that it should be richly endowed and its 'dignitaries be enabled to take their stations with the nobles of the land. But 'speaking in a political point of view, 'he had no hesitation to state, that the 'existence of the Protestant Establishment 'was the great bond of union between the 'two countries, and if ever that unfortunate moment should arrive when they 'would rashly lay their hands on the 'property of the Church, to rob it of its 'rights that moment they would seal the 'doom and terminate the connexion between the two countries.'* It behoved the Ministers then well to consider their position—supported in their measure by those who did not even profess to have the same end as they had professed to have in view, and opposed by those who really had that object at heart—that of supporting the Church and the Legislative Union. If they did not learn from this a useful lesson, and proceeded with the same want of caution that had hitherto marked their steps, he warned them of the imminent danger in which they placed, not the Irish branch of the Established Church, but as Lord Plunkett said, the connexion between the two countries; and all that even in a mere secular point of view was valuable to both. As regarded religion in its most exalted sense, it was above their reach—its immutable truth human legislation could not assail. They might break the mere earthen vessels which the wisdom of ages had formed and much human blood cemented—but legislation could not extinguish the sacred light that burned in them. They might subvert the altar, but they could not strike off one spark from the holy fire which had ever warmed and illuminated, and would eternally preserve the true spiritual Church. The hon. and learned Gentleman concluded by moving as an amendment, that the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

Mr. *Estcourt* begged leave to second this Amendment, and must say, that he did so most cordially. He was aware of the outcry that was raised against the Church cess, and the great anxiety that many people manifested to get rid of it; but he wished them to recollect, that this was an impost for the support of the Church, not only small in itself, but placed upon the land on which it had been charged for a long time, so that the present possessors of the land had taken the land subject to this charge. It was, in fact, a charge upon the landlord, and he was therefore surprised that Irish Members should be found to declare, that it was a payment made by the occupier of the soil. If the Church cess were taken off, it would be imposed upon the tenant for the benefit of the landlord, who now received less rent than he otherwise would do, on account of the cess. If that fund were now to be taken from the Church, and to go, as it would, into the pockets of the owners of the soil, he should much object to the change, for he should consider it as an application of Church funds to secular purposes. This Bill, and the former Bill which had been introduced on this subject, had been some time before the House, but he had not yet heard Ministers state one reason why there should be a reduction of the number of Irish Bishops, such as was now projected. It was true, that the noble Lord had said, there were too many Bishops in Ireland; but neither the dictum of the noble Lord, nor the opinion of any Member of that House, was in itself sufficient to justify the House in reducing the number of the Bishops. They ought to see some clear ground for the reduction fairly made out, before they consented to it. He opposed the reduction of the number of Irish Bishops, because he was certain that it could not take place without serious injury to the Church. There were some Gentlemen who supported the plan for the reduction in the number of Irish Bishops, on the ground that in a considerable portion of the country the number of Protestants was small. But that, did not seem to him the true reason that should govern their decision on this subject. They ought to consider the distance over which the Bishop's diocese would extend, and then they would find that from that circumstance, and from the difficulty of communicating with all the clergy in each diocese, the duty of a Bishop would be so great, that no one man would be able to perform it. He believed, indeed, that the number of Bishops required in Ireland was greater than that required in England, because of the greater necessity of the clergy having frequent recourse to the spiritual direction of their superiors. These were two observations with regard to this part of the Bill; as to the other part of it—that of the proposed taxation of benefices—he must say, that he thought that taxation began too low, for it began upon an income of 200*l.* a-year; and every one must be aware that no man upon such an income as that could do more than barely maintain a respectable station in society; indeed, he could hardly maintain such a station as the nature of his office required. Besides this, when the tax was once imposed it was always to be levied, and it was to be levied regularly every half year, without considering that, in some cases, the clergy would not be paid their tithes, and that the amount of their receipts, even when they were paid, would be subject to considerable variation. To enforce the regular payment of the tax under such circumstances, would be most injurious. It would be most injurious, not only to the individual, but to the Church. He considered the two Churches of England and Ireland as identified, and that one could not suffer, without involving the other in the consequences of the injury. He looked upon this Bill as calculated to inflict a direct injury upon the Church of Ireland, and therefore as likewise calculated, through the same means, to injure the interests of the English Church. Under these circumstances, he most cordially seconded the Amendment. The Bill was so objectionable, that it was impossible for any man who valued the Church to vote for sending it to the Committee, where it could never be sufficiently amended.

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* Hansard, (new series) xi. p. 574.

Mr. *Plumptre* was of opinion, that although in some respects the Bill did not go far enough, there were some provisions contained in it which no man who did not study the total subversion of the Church Establishment, could for a moment sanction. In the first place, to the proposed diminution of the number of bishoprics he could not, as a friend to the religion in which he had been educated, and as one desirous of maintaining inviolate the leading principles of the Irish Union, give his assent. The Bishops of Ireland ought, he maintained, to be subject to but one species of translation—namely, a translation from this to the next world. He was also strongly opposed to the contemplated appropriation of Church property to secular purposes. In his opinion it would be far more desirable to diminish the revenues than the number of the existing Bishops. If it were intended by Parliament to render the Bishops what they ought to be—namely, the guardians of those over whom they were placed, the faithful superintendents of those committed to their charge—surely the means to attain that end was not so to diminish their numbers that one-half of their duty should of necessity be neglected in order to enable them to attend properly to the other. He was by no means an advocate for continuing to the Bishops the large salaries they at present enjoyed, and would willingly consent to any measure with a view to the curtailment of their revenues. The plan he would recommend to his Majesty's Ministers was, not to diminish the number of Bishops, but to divide equally among them the amount of the revenues of those sees proposed to be retained. In conclusion, the hon. Member observed, that not seeing any prospect of so amending the Bill in

Committee as to obviate the repugnance he entertained to some of its principles, he felt called upon to give his vote in support of the Amendment.

Mr. *Secretary Stanley* said, that if it had not been for the direct appeal which had been made to him individually by every Gentleman who had yet spoken, he should have waited till a later period in the debate to give his answer to the objections of hon. Gentlemen, both to the principle and to the details of this measure. But the speech of the hon. member for Kent called upon him to endeavour to correct a misunderstanding which weighed upon that hon. Member's mind, and endangered the loss of his vote to a measure which he seemed to a certain extent inclined to support. He was glad to learn from the speeches of the hon. member for the University of Dublin, and the hon. member for the University of Oxford, who might be considered fair representatives of the Church, that the opposition to this Bill on the part of the Church was confined to two or three points, which were susceptible of amendment in the progress of the Bill. At the same time, he should be deceiving the House and the hon. member for Dublin if he were to hold out any expectation that Government would accede to any of the Amendments which had been suggested upon those points. In the details of the greater portion of the Bill, all the speakers who had preceded him had expressed their concurrence. The hon. member for the University of Dublin had even gone much further than the two other hon. Gentlemen who espoused the same side of the question, and had stated, with a degree of candour which did him infinite honour, that he should not have objected to the details of this Bill, had it been brought forward by the friends, instead of the opponents of the Church. Now, to such a mode of arguing, it was very difficult for him (Mr. Stanley) to give any answer. "It is an excellent measure," said the hon. Member, "but because you, who are generally in the wrong, have chanced to blunder upon it, it is bad as coming from you; and therefore, though I believe it unimpeachable, I will now move that it be read a second time this day six months." The hon. Member had likewise said, that if the measure had been devised by a friend of the Church, he should have given it his support. The hon. Member had done him the favour of saying, that the hon. Member believed he was a friend to the Established Church, who was not likely to endanger it wilfully; and he hoped that he should not be considered as indulging his own personal vanity, when he told the hon. member for the University of Dublin, that if there was one individual more than another upon whose responsibility the framing of this Bill rested, it was the individual who was then addressing the House, and whom he had acknowledged to be a friend to the Established Church. Let the House, therefore, see the points on which the hon. Member and he differed, and then decide whether they were not such as would justify the hon. Member in supporting the second reading of this Bill, notwithstanding his opposition to those points of detail. He asked the most devoted stickler for the property, the immunities, the privileges, and he would even say the prejudices, of the Church of Ireland, whether it was either safe or friendly to that Church to say, "This Bill may be right—there may be abuses which this Bill will remedy; but in the present state of public feeling, because I object to part of the Bill, I will not meddle with the abuses at all. I will leave the Church to stand by those abuses, unrepaired and unmitigated; and yet I will call myself a friend to the Church." He was ready to admit the friendship of the hon. Member to the Church, but he doubted the wisdom and sagacity with which the hon. Member displayed his friendship. In his opinion, the real friends of the Church of Ireland were those who looked at acknowledged abuses; and, in the face of those who might perhaps seek to reform the Church, in order the more certainly to destroy it, he would say that, rather than rest satisfied with the continuance of those abuses, he preferred retreating from a point that was untenable to a point where you could stand manfully against your enemies on account of your having purged yourself from the impurities by which you were previously surrounded. The fact was, that at present they could not stand still. The hon. Member had said, "I agree with you in the propriety of abolishing the Vestry-cess." Now, if there was any point of the Bill which removed from the Church its property, it was that part of the Bill which related to the Vestry-cess; there it touched most nearly on the property of the Church, if any man looked on property in its strictest sense. But the hon. Member gave up his objection to the abolition of the Church-cess. He said, "I do not object to the augmentation of small livings; I do not object to enforcing the residence of the clergy; I do not object to the dissolution of unions; I do not object to your plan for raising funds for the repair or the erection of places of worship in Ireland; in all these points I acquiesce with you;" and then, after approximating to us most closely, he made a most curious conclusion, for he said, "Though I agree with you in all these particulars, there are some parts of your Bill of which I disapprove, and therefore, instead of seeking to amend them in Committee, and to avail myself of such parts of the Bill as I approve, I will get rid of the whole affair at once, by throwing the Bill out altogether." But he had said enough of the inconsistency of such conduct, and would proceed to call the attention of the House to the three points of objection which had been raised against the Bill. The first point of objection respected the question of perpetuities; and here he joined issue at once with the hon. Member who had raised that question. He would abide by what he had formerly asserted, that it was not desirable that the property of the Church of Ireland should be diverted to other than ecclesiastical purposes. The question which he wished the House to consider was, whether the property which this Bill was going to divert was the property of the Church or not. To understand that question, it was necessary to understand what they were going to divert. What, then, were the Bishops' leases—what were the rights of the Church tenants—and what was the power of the Legislature over them? The Bishop was entitled to let his land by Act of Parliament. He was sure that the hon. Member would not deny that it was from an Act of Parliament that the Church derived its power over these leases, and that Act of Parliament enacted, that it should not be lawful for any Bishop to grant a lease for more than twenty-one years. It had been said, that this provision was intended to prevent the alienation of the property of the Church, but what had been the practical effect of it? The practical effect had been, that from a remote period the Bishops had always been in the habit of anticipating the revenues which, in point of right, belonged to their successors. He did not mention this in terms of complaint, but the Bishops being debarred by Act of Parliament from granting any but leases for twenty-one years, which were generally granted at a low rent, remunerated themselves by granting repeated renewals of these leases, and by taking payment of a fine on each of these renewals. The fine was generally calculated upon the actual value of the anticipation of a money-payment spread over twenty-one years, at the rate of interest usually taken into calculation in Bishops' leases. Now, the legal rate of interest in Ireland is six per cent, but in the Bishops' leases, as an advantage to the tenant, the interest is calculated at eight per cent. For instance, suppose that the Bishops' rents in twenty-one years would amount to *5l.*, then *1l.*, which at compound interest at eight per cent. would amount in twenty-one years to *5l.*, would be paid as the fine for the renewal of the lease. Thus the Bishop receiving in anticipation a fifth of the beneficial rent, receives by the perpetual renewal of his leases, a full rack rent every year, each payment being calculated upon a compound interest of eight per cent. to the tenant. It had been said, that if the Bishops would only permit their leases to run out, they would receive a greater annual sum than that which they received at present. This was an entire fallacy, as he had already shown that, in anticipation, the Bishops received already the full rack rent. Now, this Bill proposed to add to the Church the power of granting leases in perpetuity, instead of confining them to grant leases for twenty-one years only, renewable at any period of that term. This would be a great advantage to the tenant, as it would enable him to sell his lease in perpetuity; and it was this very property, which was neither the property of the Church nor of the tenant in fee, which the Government were now preparing to sell under this Act of Parliament. The Church and the tenant would pay the same as they did now; and yet, though the advantage to the tenant was so notorious, they were told that the tenant ought not to make any pecuniary remuneration for the pecuniary advantage which he would receive from this change in the existing law. It might just as well be argued, that when a copyhold tenant enfranchised himself from the Lord of the Manor, he ought to pay no fine for his enfranchisement. In the case of the Church of Ireland the Bishops were the lords of the manor, and the Church tenants were the copyholders; but, as the Bishops had no power beyond twenty-one years, it was only the State that could enfranchise the tenantry, and for that enfranchisement the State was entitled to demand a remuneration. On this ground he contended, that inasmuch as this was not either the property of the Church or the property of the tenant, and inasmuch as the State had the right to confer upon the tenant the perpetuity of his lease, there was nothing unjust in calling upon the tenant to pay for the advantage which he thus derived from the State. He would also observe, that in this arrangement the State was dealing with the Bishops as it had dealt with the clergy in the case of the composition for tithes. "But," said the hon. Member, "this Bill will lower the authority of the Church." He could not conceive in what mode it lowered the authority of the Church, until he heard the hon. Member speaking of the constitution of the Board, and saying that the Church had little or no weight in it. How the hon. Member made that point out was equally surprising; for it appeared from the details of the Bill that four out of the nine members of the Board were to be Bishops of the Established Church. Perhaps the hon. Member was of opinion, that Bishops alone should have control over the affairs of the Church. But on this point he must refer to another assertion in the speech of the hon. member for the University of Dublin, and that was, that the Bishops had already ecclesiastical concerns enough to attend to. That was the very ground on which Government had deemed it expedient to appoint other commissioners, who could give their undivided attention to the duties which they had to perform. This was the only mode in which the authority of the Church was lowered by this Bill, except, indeed, it were in the diminution of the number of the Bishops. That was a point on which objection was taken to the principle of the Bill; for the question here was, not whether ten, or eight, or four Bishops, should be taken from the present number, but whether the principle of diminishing the number at all should be admitted. He must again remind the House, that the hon. member for the University of Dublin had said that this Bill would be well enough if it had been introduced under the sanction of the friends of the Church. Before he introduced this Bill into Parliament, he (Mr. Stanley) had felt it to be his duty to consult the Primate of Ireland upon its provisions—a Prelate distinguished for his attention to the interests of the Church, and determined, if ever Prelate was, that under his guidance the Church should suffer no detriment which he could prevent. The question was raised as to the best means of meeting the deficiency which would be occasioned by the abolition of the Vestry-cess—and it was the suggestion of the Primate of Ireland that the least objectionable mode of meeting it would be by reducing the number of Bishops in Ireland, and by diverting their revenues to that purpose. He did not mean to say, that the Primate supported the reduction of ten Bishops. Hon. Gentlemen cheered, but he was not now discussing the number of Bishops to be reduced, but only the principle whether any Bishops ought to be reduced. It was said, that any reduction of their number was a weakening of the Church, and depriving it of the props and pillars on which it rested for support; and yet he had shown that the principle on which it was founded had been affirmed and supported by a Prelate who was one of the most zealous defenders of the Church, and one of its ablest props and pillars. The question then arose whether the Government had gone too far in diminishing the number of the Bishops; and the hon. member for the University of Oxford had said, "You ought not to consider so much the number of souls which the Bishops have to take care of, as the extent of the diocese over which they will now have to preside." In consequence of that observation, he would read to the House a list of the number of benefices which were under the care of the different Bishops who were to be reduced; for there was no better method of obtaining a knowledge of the duty which each Bishop had to perform, than by knowing what and how many benefices he had to superintend. Now, in the diocese of Raphoe there were thirty-four benefices; in that of Dromore, twenty-seven; in that of Clogher, forty-five; in that of Kildare, fifty-three; in that of Ossory, sixty-two; in that of Waterford, sixty-six; in that of Cork, ninety-three; in that of Clonfert, thirty-one; in that of Elfin, thirty-seven; and in that of Killala, thirty. Would any man pretend to tell him that the superintendence of this number of benefices was so equal to the full capacity of any Bishop, that it would be dangerous to the interests of the Church to add to them the superintendence of the same number of benefices in another diocese? Why, in the extensive diocese of Chester there were as many benefices as there were in the whole of Ireland. He believed that there were 1,200 benefices in that Bishopric. In the scheme which Ministers had proposed for the union of the Irish bishoprics, it was so arranged that no Bishop would have 200 benefices under his care. The Bishop of Chester had, he believed, 1,200 benefices in his diocese, and the highest number which any Irish bishopric would have was 179, and that bishopric was the bishopric of Ossory. But an hon. Gentleman had said, "There is no reason to diminish the number of the Irish Bishops." Now, if it were only for the clamour that the staff of the Church in Ireland was too numerous for the amount of its parochial clergy, that would, in his opinion, be a sufficient reason for the alteration now proposed. In England there were twenty-six bishoprics, and between 11,000 and 12,000 parishes; in Ireland there were twenty-two bishoprics, and between 1,100 and 1,200 separate benefices. Now, when the parishes in England were to those of Ireland as ten to one, did it seem very unreasonable that the number of Bishops in Ireland should be reduced to the proportion of two to five, as compared with England? The Government would be open to censure if they left too few Bishops for the performance of the episcopal duties; but, compared with the duties they had to perform, he thought they would be quite sufficient; but it was said that they ought to diminish the revenue, and allow the number of Bishops to remain unaltered; but as a mere question of the advantage to be derived to the country from so many resident noblemen, he thought it could make no difference whether twenty were to remain with a revenue reduced to half, or ten with a whole revenue. There were three points of objection — first, as to interference with the property of the Church, which he had shown was not the property of the Church; next, as to the diminution of the number of Bishops, which he had shown would be no weakening of the authority of the Church. As to the equalization of the property of the Bishops, he objected to it as one which would be attended with great inconvenience, and he thought it better to leave a trifling inequality in the sees than to put them all on an equality. The objections to the details of the Bill were but trifling, and he would not go into them. The two great objections were—one, that it would weaken the Church; and the other, that it would unsettle property. These contrary objections showed that no solid or substantial objection could be made to the measure, which, he thought, would be a safe and beneficial change. He would admit, that in any great change there would be some risk, but he thought that any risk of that kind, from this measure, would not be half so great a risk as there would be in leaving the Church in Ireland in its present state, and without any improvement.

Sir *Robert Inglis* said, that, from the first moment the present measure had been introduced he entertained, and had constantly expressed, the strongest aversion to it, and, so far from reflection tending to remove that impression, or render him lukewarm in his opposition to it, every hour's consideration increased the aversion with which he viewed most of its leading principles. In two respects, indeed, it was improved; and he thanked his Majesty's Ministers for the improvement, since the present Bill respected the vested rights of existing incumbents; and above all, since it did not provide, as before, for the permanent depression of Protestantism by closing for ever any church in which, for any three years, the service had not been celebrated. That power was now limited to three years before the passing of this Act. [Mr. *Stanley:* The former provision was merely a clerical error in printing of the Bill.] Notwithstanding these partial improvements, he looked with unqualified hostility upon the whole Bill. The Bill was entitled to the support of no man who in the least valued the Christian character of the Church or of the country. From the crown of the head to the sole of the feet of this Bill—from its very title to its schedule and last clause—he objected to every part of it. In the very title of the Bill there was a direct fallacy. The Bill purported to touch only the temporalities of the Church of Ireland; but would any man tell him that a reduction in the number of Bishops related only to temporalities? Diminish the income of the Church, and you touched its temporalities; but disturb the sacred order of spiritual succession, and you touched, not the temporalities, but the spirituality of the order. He denied the competence but not the power of Parliament to carry such a Bill into effect. The will of Parliament was its power, but he denied its right. The doctrine never had been held, that Parliament had a right to interfere in the manner in which this Bill proposed, without at least obtaining the assent of the Church itself. At the Reformation nothing had been done by Parliament which had not previously been done by the Church, and to which it had not previously given its approbation. He would refer for an elucidation of this subject to the speech which had been delivered by Lord Temple on the occasion of Horne Tooke's introduction into that House; a speech rich with references, and powerful in arguments upon this subject. He would also remind the right hon. Secretary of what occurred in 1698. When, at that time, in the Parliament of Ireland, a project of a nature similar to the present had been introduced, the Bishops of Ireland had entered a protest on the Journals of the Lords, in which they protested against being assessed without their own assent delivered in convocation. He did not claim any exemption for the Church from the burthens common to all the King's subjects, but the present measure was in the nature of a partial tax on the principal part of the Christian Church. In the year 1695 another attack was made against the Church of Ireland, and again on that occasion did two of the Bishops enter their protests, although by faction they were obliged to withdraw that protest. He would maintain, that no precedent had established any right in Parliament over the Church to touch that which the Church had not given its permission to be touched. He would ask any man to show when the State had ever given any thing to the Church. He would assert, that the State had never given any thing except the sums voted in the reign of Queen Anne to build chapels and churches, and the grants that had been made by Act of Parliament about three years ago. Were Gentlemen aware that the property of some of the sees of Ireland was the oldest of any established property in that country? And even in England the properties of many of the sees were of more ancient date than any other in the respective counties. Never had the State established one single parish church, except, at least, by the increase of the first fruits; and he again denied that the Church owed any part of its existing property to any Act of the Legislature. Nothing had been done by the Parliament in the reign of Henry 8th, except that of transferring the property of one Church into the hands of another, unless the Church itself had expressed its approval in convocation. At that period the Church had gone *pari passu* with the Parliament. The present case ought at least to be made parallel to precedents already established, and the Parliament ought to originate no proceedings without the sanction of the Convocation of the Church. But if, for the sake of argument, he admitted that the property of the Church had been disturbed at that or at any other period—if acts of spoliation had been committed against Church property 300 years ago—was that any reason for disturbing the rights of property at the present day? Was this doctrine to be applied to private life? If Parliament had a right to interfere with the property of the Church, he would ask what right could any layman holding Church property maintain to continue in the possession of it? This doctrine did not apply only to broad lands, but to tithes and every other species of claim. There were Members sitting opposite to him, who ought to be very cautious how they urged Parliament to touch Church property in clerical hands, since the same argument and the same right applied to Church property, to abbey lands, in the hands of laymen. It was a fact of some consequence that, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, not more than 178 persons had been deprived of ecclesiastical property on the ground of non-conformity. He begged the House to reflect upon the fact that the Roman Catholic Church would not allow Parliament to interfere in the number of its Bishops; that the Church of Scotland would not permit Parliament to touch the number of its ruling elders; and that the Dissenters would not let Parliament dictate to them whether the number of their ministers were too great or too small. He would ask, then, what right had Parliament to interfere with the Established Church, and to deprive it at one blow of half of those who represented its interests and upheld its doctrines? What right, he asked, had Parliament to interfere between one see and another, and what right had they to determine whether any see should exist or not? He was aware that many Gentlemen had said, that the present Bill was only a consolidation of the bishoprics, and that it had the authority and sanction of the highest prelate in the Irish Church. Without departing from the great respect he entertained for that reverend Prelate, he must say that he grieved that he should have given an assent, however qualified, to such a measure. The question was not as to three or four more or three or four less in the number of the Irish Bishops, but it was a specific question; and if Parliament had any right to get rid of a single Bishop, if it had any right to annihilate a single see, it had an equal right to destroy them all. The right once established, all succeeding measures were merely questions of discretion. He would maintain, that the Bill was directly opposed to the Coronation Oath, to the Act of Union, and, thirdly, to the Roman Catholic Relief Bill. He could not understand how a prince who had sworn to preserve to the Bishops and clergy all the rights that belonged to them, could give his assent to a measure which at one blow annihilated one half of the spiritual existence of the clerical body. The House had, on a former occasion, listened to him with so much indulgence, when he spoke upon the subject of the Coronation Oath, that he would not now enlarge upon it; but he must be permitted to say, that even if the doctrine were true, which some hon. Members, republicans in theory at least, urged, namely, that the King was only the chief magistrate of the people, though his right as a distinct independent part of the Legislature were denied, still, in a case connected with his own oath, he must personally have a distinct and personal judgment. In all cases, indeed, the proceedings of the two Houses were resolutions only, until the four words which they had heard this afternoon in the other House are pronounced, and their proceedings became law; but, in this case, the King could never be held bound by any unanimity of the two Houses. With respect to the Act of Union, that Act directly provided for the maintenance of the Bishops and Archbishops; and he must confess himself at a loss to understand on what principle their number could be decreased even by one. Where was the House to stop? If ten might be suppressed, why not twelve, why not eighteen? It was like the horse's tail in Horace—"*Demo unum, demo etiam unum,*" until the whole was left bare. In respect to interference with Church property, he was aware of the precedent drawn from Lord Harrowby's Bill. Though he deprecated the use to which the principle of that Bill might be applied, he denied that it furnished any analogy to the present Bill. In the first place it distributed income among the clergy *inter se*, whereas the present Bill contemplated the appropriation of Church property to state purposes; but, above all, Lord Harrowby's Bill was in its operation discretionary, since every rector might have resided, in other words, every stipendiary curate might have become an incumbent. It did not levy a compulsory tax upon property as such. The Act at first went to destroy the first fruits and the vestry cess. In one of the sorts of Parliament which had been held in Ireland two months ago, the Church Bill had been contrasted with the Irish Coercion Bill, and the speakers had declared that the Church Bill gave to the people an advantage of not more than 2*d.* an acre. He believed that it was a fraction almost incalculable. In no case did it amount to more than 1*s.* 6*d.* an acre; but it was not the amount but the authority of the Church which was to be regarded. He could only compare the case to one in which the expenses of trials at Assize, instead of being assessed on the county, were to be paid by the barristers who might be engaged in the trials. Were the expenses of the Church to be defrayed by its ministers, as if they only had an interest in its worship? And was a tax now levied on property as such to be imposed on the persons of the incumbents? In the present instance what would be the effect of this part of the Bill but to take from the clergy their property, in order to put it into the hands of the landlords? He must beg leave to remind the noble Lord on the Treasury Bench that a very large number of the parishes of Ireland had never paid first fruits at all. One entire diocese in Ireland never had paid first fruits, and the tax now proposed would not, in this case, act, as the Bill professed, as a substitution of one tax for another, but it would be in all respects a decidedly new and original imposition. It was possible, that there was a clerical error in a

Return upon the Table; but he held in his hand a document, which stated that there were a thousand rectories and vicarages of Ireland under similar circumstances. On all of these the Bill would impose an entirely new tax, instead of substituting, as in other cases, one burthen for another. There were two more dioceses in which, with few exceptions, the livings never had paid any first fruits. There were similar cases throughout Ireland where the rectories were rated under 6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*, and the vicarages under 5*l.* in the time of Queen Elizabeth. If the principle of the Bill with respect to first fruits were to be adopted, it ought to be equally applied to lay impropriations both in England and in Ireland, especially as so many of the lay impropriators in both countries had neglected to provide for the parishioners those services for which the grants of tithes had been made. It had been proposed by the learned and hon. Member (the Recorder for Dublin) to appropriate a certain given sum from the income of each Bishop, without diminishing the number of the sees; and this would, in some respects, remove the objections which he (Sir Robert Inglis) entertained against the Bill, for his strongest antipathy was to the annihilation of the bishoprics. The Bill itself was a triumph to the Roman Catholics, and as such it had been considered by them; and yet the noble Lord had gained nothing for his Government by the concession. He had conciliated no man by it. The hon. and learned member for Dublin, though he had hailed the principle of the Bill, had, in the course of the same week, asked what good it would do to the people; would it relieve the starving peasant? And the hon. and learned member for Tipperary had said that the Bill was valuable, because it established a principle, which Parliament might at any time extend. His right hon. friend had given as a reason for the adoption of this measure the clamour of those who demanded some change in the Church Establishment. He understood him to say, that the clamour which had been raised was a good and substantial reason for the diminution of the number of the bishoprics in Ireland. Now he (Sir R. Inglis) never could consider that the existence of any clamour either in England or Ireland, could justify that House, as a branch of the Legislature, in conceding any one proposition which hon. Gentlemen could not declare to be consistent with their opinions out of doors. He would say that no clamour could justify a Minister in hurrying forward a measure which his own understanding did not recommend for adoption. The whole of this measure must be looked upon with suspicion; and he trusted, concurring as he did with the hon. and learned member for the University of Dublin, that the decision of the House would be to postpone the second reading of this Bill till that day six months.

Mr. *Robert Grant* felt it to be his duty to state the grounds on which he meant to support this Bill. It was impossible that the feelings of his hon. friend who had just spoken could be more strongly opposed to the measure than his were in favour of it. To use the expression of his hon. friend, "from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot—from the preamble, to the concluding schedule," the provisions of the Bill should receive his cordial approbation. The first point in the speech of his hon. friend, to which he found it necessary to advert, was the demurrer, if he might use the phrase, which his hon. friend had put forward against the jurisdiction of the House to legislate on this subject, without having first consulted the Church—without having, in fact, the opinion of the convocation regularly convened on this subject. Now, he joined issue with his hon. friend on this point. He had not heard that any of those Gentlemen, who, though they might be hostile to this measure, yet wished for a Reform, and a considerable Reform, in the Church—he did not hear that any of them were anxious that a convocation should be specially summoned, in order that they might be consulted as to the alterations which it would be proper to make in the system. If they thought that such a course was the proper one, why then, let a motion for that purpose be made, in order that the House might discuss it regularly. He, however, would say, not only that Parliament was competent to proceed in this course, without any such consultation, but that it was its duty to undertake, without delay, the Reform of the Church. They were bound to consider this measure, and if it appeared to be a good one, they were equally bound to agree to it. What was the object of the measure? Why, the consolidation, and not, as his hon. friend had stated, the suppression of bishoprics. He would say, "that a Bill for suppression" was a fallacious and improper designation of this measure. What was the nature of the measure? It was not to suppress bishoprics, but to increase the extent over which the duties of a certain number of Bishops would hereafter be applicable. It was an extension of different dioceses; and in all times, churches in every country, had effected the consolidation of dioceses. They would find this to be the fact, if they looked to the best and purest times of the Church. In Italy, there were examples where two, three, or four dioceses were consolidated into one. In Spain and Germany, the same thing had been done; and it had also been the case in Ireland. This was not the first attempt to effect such an object in Ireland. Considerable stress had been laid upon the identity of the Church of Ireland and England; but putting out of view the Catholics, in the ratio of the population, twelve Bishops was an ample proportion for Ireland. This would be enough, treating the question only as a question of suppressing bishoprics. The canon, *crescenti numero populorum augetur numerus episcoporum,* adapted the number of Bishops to the population. But it was said, the Bill would afford a triumph to the Catholics, who would continue to have the same number of Bishops. He hoped he was not indifferent to the interests of the English Protestant Church, or that he did not think lightly of the duty of meeting the Catholics in Ireland; but his notion was, that they were to be met *non numero,sedpondere;* not by numbers, but by the zeal, devotion, and assiduity with which the clerical functions were discharged. With regard to Church cess, he was a little surprised that those who took up the principle that Church property was not to be secularized, should contend that this was the property of the Church. It was a clear principle, that if there was any case in which the exercise of the proprietary right of the Church was injurious to the great trust for which that right was given, it was the duty of the Legislature to prefer the great object, and to consult the benefit of the community. If the great object was injured rather than promoted, the question ought to be so disposed of, that the result might be beneficial to the trust. Thus, in the case of tithes, as the collection of them in Ireland marred the great object of benefiting the community, the Legislature had interfered for the sake of promoting the interest of the Church itself. The amount of the Church cess, 60,000*l.*, was so small a sum, the uncertainty of it, and the invidious circumstance that it was disposed of by Protestants, and that the Catholics had no voice in its disposal, altogether rendered the impost so odious, that it would be for the advantage of the Church to get rid of it. He did not call this an alienation; it was no alienation. The relinquishment of it was a sort of capital invested in the good opinion of the people, which made a return in goodwill. Another question related to Bishops' leases. It was argued, that inasmuch as certain acts of Parliament gave them the whole rights of property over unimproved, though improvable land, the Legislature could not interfere with those rights. This was founded upon mere special pleading, and would not bear the test of argument. It could not be said, that the Legislature took from the Church what the Church never had. If it was the property of any one, it was the property of the tenantry, not of the Church, though the right had been in abeyance. This had been always admitted in all discussions which involved the question of leases. If there was an injury done to any party, it was to the tenant or lay proprietor, as the renewal of those leases had now become so much a matter of course, that they were considered property. It was a strong argument with him in favour of the Reform in the Church of Ireland, that, by the change proposed, it would become a working Church, not a Church kept up on account of the patronage connected with it, as had hitherto been the case. He thought it a monstrous thing to keep up an immense establishment, not for the sake of religion, or of the Church, but for the sake of its temporalities. In conclusion, he regretted that the hon. Baronet should say, that his right hon. friend had yielded to clamour, for his right hon. friend was the last person who could be accused of yielding too readily to the clamour of his opponents.

Sir *Robert Peel* said, that there were some of the objects contemplated in this Bill of which he approved; there were details in it which he admitted were capable of improvement in the Committee, and objections had been urged against the principle and details of the measure in the whole extent of which he did not concur. The right hon. Gentleman had stated, with the dexterity of a skilful disputant, that the real question now to be decided was, whether there should be a reform in the Church or not. He denied that this was the case, and he begged that the House would not put that construction on the matter, or interpret a vote hostile to some parts of this Bill, into an opinion opposed to all Church Reform. He approved of the Bill, as far as it proceeded on the principle of removing every abuse in the Church Establishment, and of requiring from those who were intrusted with the spiritual care of parishes a constant and scrupulous discharge of their duties. He also concurred in the propriety of abolishing Church cess; he considered that the right of the Church to this cess was different in its nature from its right to tithes. It was conferred by statute, and not only that, but the grant of it depended on the will of a body, independent of the Church; namely, the vestry. He was, therefore, ready to forego a claim, which, under the very peculiar circumstances of Ireland, it was for the interest of the Church itself to abandon. He thought that, by making some other provision for the repair of churches, they would remove a cause of disunion, and hostility to the Establishment, which it was not worth the while of the Church to incur for such a trifling amount. He also believed, that the Tithe Commutation measure would produce little good, if in each parish they left the Church cess to be levied from the occupying tenantry of another religion. At the same time, he must maintain, that the removal of the cess would be a direct benefit to the proprietors of land, and though, on principle, he was ready to defend the propriety of throwing the expense of the repair of churches on those proprietors, still he thought it was better on the whole for the Church itself that it should undertake the charge, and he was willing that it should be borne by the revenues of the Church. He hoped, however, that he should experience, in this instance, the same readiness which Government had already shown to depart from its plans when convinced of their injustice; and that, in the details of this measure, the noble Lord would continue to act on the principle on which he acted on a former occasion, when he consented to the exemption of all existing interests from the taxation imposed by the Bill. It was proposed, that no part of this new burthen to be thrown upon the Church should be borne by those whose livings were of the annual value of less than 200*l.*; but he was confident the landholders of Ireland would not consent that this charge of repairing churches should be thrown from their shoulders upon the holders of benefices of so small an amount as 300*l.* per annum. If the House should consent to the principle, which he thought was scarcely probable, of exclusively taxing the clergy for this object, he should still contend that it was not right to abstract anything from small livings, and that a clergyman should have a clear stipend, at the least, of 300*l.* per annum. Again, he had great doubts as to the policy or justice of a graduated Income-tax upon the clergy, and this proposition, though included in the Bill, formed no part of its principle. The noble Lord stated, on a former occasion, with great force, the objection to a graduated Property-tax. Those objections, in part at least, applied to the present proposition. The principle of graduation appeared in a qualified degree, to be recognized by it. While he admitted that the revenues of the Church ought in future to provide a substitute for the Church cess, he still doubted, whether it would not be better to defray the charge by some other means, out of the savings on Bishops' lands for instance—than by a tax exclusively imposed on the clergy, and which tax seemed to imply, that the clergy had some special interest, apart from the general interests of the community in maintaining the fabric of the Church. With respect to the reduction of the number of Bishops, he could not concur in what had fallen from the hon. member for Oxford, who thought the reduction so objectionable in principle, that it was beyond the competence of Parliament to ordain it. His hon. friend had contended, that no unions of bishoprics had taken place since the Reformation, without the consent of the Convocation. Now, if his memory did not deceive him, unions had taken place since the Reformation, without the consent of the Convocation, upon the authority of the King in Council, and of Acts of Parliament. It was justly said by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Grant), who spoke last, that such an instance took place in the 2nd of Elizabeth, when Cashel and Emly were united. He believed also that Ardagh had been united with Tuam since the Reformation, without the instrumentality of a Convocation; and Kilfenora was united to Killaloe so lately as 1752. He could not concur in the position, that an Act for the union of one bishopric with another constituted a violation of the Coronation Oath. He did not think it possible to maintain the doctrine, that the King of England was bound by that Oath, in his legislative as well as his executive capacity, to maintain every privilege of the Bishops, and of the clergy in the exact state in which those privileges stood in the year 1688. If that were the true interpretation of the Coronation Oath, it followed as a natural consequence, that the kings who had given their assent to any Act subsequently passed—varying the strict legal privileges of the Church —by uniting bishoprics or parishes, or commuting tithes, which had already taken place, had violated the Coronation Oath, a conclusion at which he (Sir Robert Peel) should be extremely sorry to arrive. In his opinion, the Coronation Oath of the Monarch imposed a duty to maintain to the utmost of his power the interests of the Established Church. There was left to the King the exercise of a discretion, tobe regulated by his own conscience, by his own sincere, honest decision of the question, whether any particular measure was or was not for the interests of the Church. If, on a review of comparative advantages to the Church, or of dangers menacing the Church from different directions, the King conscientiously took that course which secured to the Church in his deliberate judgment, the greatest prospect of advantage, or warded off the greatest amount of danger, he for one never could believe, that a King acting on that principle, violated his oath, although he might consent to the modification or abandonment of some privilege heretofore possessed by the Bishops and clergy. He never could consent to the doctrine, that the King must rigidly maintain every ancient privilege of the Church, even to the certain injury of the best interests of the Church. This the King must do if he had no discretion. If he had a discretion, who could presume to charge the King with a violation of his oath, because the King, who took the oath, differed in his conclusions as to the bearing of a particular measure, from others who had no oath imposed upon them. With respect to the diminution of bishoprics, at present there were twenty-two bishops in Ireland, and he should be sorry to be convinced of the policy of diminishing that number, because upon that question must depend an alteration in the Act of Union with Ireland—that Act having provided for the maintenance of a certain number of bishoprics in Ireland, and for a certain rotation regulating the order in which they were to have seats in Parliament. He must confess that he saw great objection to altering the Act of Union, and making a new arrangement. He would, therefore, infinitely rather find it consistent with the true interests of the Church to maintain the existing number of the bishoprics. The Bill before the House struck off ten out of the twenty-two, and until the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Stanley) spoke that night, no reason whatever had been assigned for making a reduction of that particular number, and surely the House would not decide that question without having returns laid before them of the extent of the different dioceses and the number of benefices in each. The House should take into its consideration what were the duties the Bishops had to perform. Supposing the proposed reduction to be made, there would be left a total number of twelve Bishops, four of whom would have to attend in Parliament. Would the remaining eight be sufficient for the discharge of the increased duties of their extended dioceses? Or if they performed the duties of superintending the incumbents in the different benefices, must they not neglect the duty imposed on them as Ecclesiastical Commissioners? The whole charge of the commission would devolve on the lay Commissioners—persons salaried by the Crown, and removable at the pleasure of the Crown. That must be inevitable—for those who gave their constant attention to the Commission, who were conversant with its daily details, would naturally have the control, so that the influence of the Church over it would soon be at an end. All these were questions of great importance, and worthy of the deepest consideration. But to go no further at the present than the plan immediately before the House, he would say that the arrangements it proposed were exceedingly defective. Upon looking to the Bill it would be seen that three of the largest cities of the South of Ireland were to be left without resident Bishops.

Mr. *Stanley* begged the right hon. Baronet's pardon, but there was a provision in the Bill which left the Bishop a choice, with the consent of the Commission, as to their place of residence.

Sir *Robert Peel* had not adverted to that particular provision of the Bill, but as it stood at present it abolished three bishoprics, and thus, unless the Bishops changed their residence, it would leave Cork, Waterford, and Kilkenny, three of the largest cities in the South of Ireland, without a resident Bishop, and of course the Protestant populations of those cities without that episcopal superintendence they had hitherto enjoyed. And here he would take the opportunity of observing that he objected to no provisions of the Bill which would render the Protestant religion more stable by requiring a strict discharge of these duties from its Ministers. He wanted to see the spreading of the Reformation in Ireland, which he feared had as yet scarcely commenced. God grant that its progress had only been delayed by the unhappy discords which prevailed there since the Reformation —that the existence of the political disabilities of the Roman Catholics, and the jealousies and suspicions inseparable from them had been the main causes of impeding the progress of the Reformation. God grant that the period might soon arrive when a real reformation would take place, not through the operation of constraints upon conscience, but through the removal of every impediment to the natural progress of divine truth. That such would be the case was a conviction deeply impressed upon his mind. The House ought, therefore, to be cautious (to use a phrase already so justly employed) before they controlled the expansive force of the Protestant faith by diverting the provision made for the support of its ministers to secular purposes, and depriving it of the power of filling a more extended sphere of duty. There was one principle involved in the Bill, to which he would never consent—that by which the property of the Church being improved by an act of the Legislature was diverted from ecclesiastical, and applied to secular purposes. Entertaining the opinions he did of the ability of the right hon. Secretary (Mr. Stanley), he never was so disappointed as at hearing his attempt to show that there was nothing in the principle of the Bill inconsistent with equity, justice, and true policy. The right hon. Gentleman narrowed the question between them on a former night to this simple issue. He contended that if the property of the Church was improved by an Act of Parliament, the amount of the improvement belonged to the State. Now he (Sir R. Peel) must repeat, that according to all the principles which had hitherto governed the disposition of property, and according to the dictates of common sense, the property so improved belonged to the Church, and to the Church alone. It was because the Bill recognised that most objectionable principle, and because the right hon. Gentleman declared, that his Majesty's Government would not abandon that principle, that he (Sir R. Peel) would take the earliest opportunity of entering his protest against the measure. He considered that principle to be dangerous to the security of all property. It was a principle be it observed, maintained by men of high character and station, who admitted that there was no distinction in respect to inviolability between Church property and private property. It was true they contended that Church property was so far under the control of the Legislature that it might admit of different distribution and appropriation for the *bona fide* purpose of promoting spiritual objects; but he had frequently heard the right hon. Gentleman argue with great force, that in no other respect did Church property differ from private property or the property of Corporations. He was the last man who would wish to tie down another to opinions once expressed on questions of general policy; but right and justice were immutable. If the right hon. Secretary had said, that, upon consideration, he had changed his opinion, he should have made no further remark, for nothing could be more childish than the unbounded confidence which some men had in their own infallibility, and in the outcry which they raised against any change by others of an opinion once professed. But in this case no change of opinion was avowed. He did not contend for greater sacredness of Church property than was contended for by the present Lord Chancellor of Ireland. That noble Lord said, on a former occasion, in this House, that although both the property of the Church, and of individuals must yield to the exigences of circumstances, he would maintain that the property of the Church was as sacred as any other. Similar sentiments had been expressed by the right hon. Gentleman himself, by Mr. Canning, and, he believed, by the present Lord Chancellor of England. How then could those who admitted that ecclesiastical property was in its character the same as other property, maintain the proposition, that if Parliament gave an improved value to Church property it might apply that improved value to state purposes? The right hon. Gentleman had argued that the Bishop had no right to this improved property; that the tenant had no right to it; and that therefore it followed, as a necessary consequence, the State had a right to it. Now, he would admit, that if Parliament, by an unexpected act of interference, improved this property, the existing Bishop and the existing tenant might have no claim in point of right to the value of the improvement; but had that great corporate body, the Church, no right to it? On what pretence did the right hon. Gentleman rest his claim to apply the value of the improvement to secular purposes? If the right hon. Gentleman were to say, that Church property was different in its nature from other property, and that the House might therefore apply it to State purposes, he should know what to say in reply; but he was at present contending with those who admitted that there was no difference between Church property and private property, and who yet asserted that, if an Act of Parliament conferred additional value upon Church property, the Legislature had a right to seize for State purposes that additional value. It was utterly impossible to maintain that proposition, and confine it to the Church. It was equally applicable to the improved value of all property, arising under similar circumstances. The right hon. Gentleman said, that the Bishops acquired this property under an Act of Parliament, and the inference was, that an Act of Parliament might take it away. That was a most important question; and he met the right hon. Gentleman with a distinct denial of the proposition. The rights exercised by the Bishops over their property were not acquired under any Act of Parliament. Those rights existed before the passing of the Act to which the right hon. Gentleman alluded. That Act merely restrained the original, inherent, and much more extensive rights possessed by the Bishops. It limited their power over their property to the granting of leases for twenty-one years; but before the Legislature stepped in and limited their rights, the Bishops possessed the power of granting leases for indefinite periods. Why did the Legislature restrain the power of the Bishops? For the benefit of the Church, and with no other view. The very title of the Act expressed its purpose. It was called, "An Act for the preservation of the inheritance, rights, and profits of lands belonging to the Church and persons ecclesiastical." He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that there was a tract in Dean Swift's Works, discussing the question of the policy of repealing that Act. In this tract, he gave the reasons which induced the Legislature to pass the Statute of Charles 2nd. He said, that the Roman Catholic Bishops, foreseeing that the Reformation was at hand, prejudiced the rights of the Church by making improvident leases in perpetuity; and he added, that many of the Protestant Bishops followed their example, conferring the property of the Church upon their near relations. For these reasons it was that the Legislature interfered for the express purpose of preserving the property of the Church, without, as was expressed in the preamble, "detriment, spoil, or prejudice." Accordingly Archbishops and Bishops were restrained from making leases of longer duration than twenty-one years—all of longer duration being declared void, expressly for the purpose of perpetuating the rights of the Church. After the lapse of 200 years it was now proposed to repeal that Act, that is, to remove the restraints which it imposed. By their removal, the property of the Church might be improved, and could it, with any semblance of justice be argued, that the improvement belonged to the State, and not to the Church? There was no new value given to this property; there was merely the removal of a legislative restraint on an original right, by which restraint the property was injured. If they sanctioned this principle of the Bill, they were immediately weakening the foundations of all collegiate, hospital, and corporate property, and ultimately the foundations of all private property. He therefore must protest altogether against the principle, that if by an Act of Parliament the House conferred a value upon property, for which new value the owner gave no consideration, and which he did not even contemplate—he denied, he said, the principle, that Parliament had a right to appropriate to the State this improved value of the property. But under what circumstances was it that the House was discussing the question? If they really had a sum of 3,000,000*l.* to deal with, there might be something so tempting in the amount of the spoliation that some men might be induced to overlook its iniquity—but the fact was, that the House was legislating about moonshine—and were engaged in a most unprofitable discussion upon a most dangerous principle. The danger was only increased by the miserable amount of their dishonest gains. The case was not one of splendid robbery, that might be thought, from its singularity, to constitute no rule for the future. Our wrong was without the palliation of being a profitable one. The precedent would be of daily application. After providing for all the wants of the clergy the House would not have a shilling left with respect to which it could apply the principle which it was asked to affirm, and which it would affirm, therefore, if it agreed to the measure as it stood, in pure wantonness. There were two descriptions of property belonging to the Church—tithes and land. Tithes were insecure, from what causes he would not now stop to inquire, but the land was secure. Well, say the House of Commons and the Government, "the tithes we will leave to the Church, for we have made them a worthless possession, but the lands we will improve and take to ourselves." What justice, he would ask, was there in this? He did not object to the improvement of the property; he wanted no personal interests of either Bishop or tenant to be promoted by it, but let the Church—let that religion for which the Church exists—benefit by the improvement. Surely the first charge on this improved revenue was to replace the sums taken from the Church by the abolition of Church cess. He did not object to an equalization of livings, and to providing for the worship of the Protestant population in the large towns; but he did object to any plan which did not consider these objects as the first to be attended to. Were these sentiments, he would ask, entertained only by persons of extreme opinions in favour of the Church? Did the right hon. Gentleman know the opinions of Sir John Newport upon these very questions of the diminution of the number of the Bishops and the appropriation of the Church revenues to secular purposes? No man had laboured longer or more earnestly in the cause of Church Reform, or had taken views more adverse to any unjust claims of the Church than Sir John Newport; and yet that right hon. Baronet had presided at a public meeting at Waterford, which came to unanimous Resolutions, approving certainly of parts of the Bill, but entirely dissenting from the proposed reduction in the number of the Bishops and the appropriation to other than ecclesiastical purposes of the improved value of Church lands. He was not singular therefore in declining at once to admit the propriety of striking off ten Irish Bishops, or of agreeing to the proposed application of the property of their sees. He recollected, that when he proposed to postpone the second reading of the Bill from Tuesday to the following Monday, it was said by his Majesty's Ministers to be quite impossible, for that Members would pass sleepless nights in the interval; that, having voted for the Coercive Bill, their conscience was not at ease until they had given their votes for the Church Reform Bill; and yet six weeks had now elapsed, and the Bill was not yet read a second time ["*hear, hear.*"] He presumed that that cheer proceeded from some Gentleman whose conscience had been upbraiding him for this long delay, and that for the last six weeks his days had been comfortless, his nights without repose. For his own part, he thought the questions involved in this Bill much too important to be decided on such grounds, or with such precipitation. On the decision of the question before the House would probably depend the future welfare of the established religion; and, therefore, however the House might agree, and he believed the great majority did agree, in the desire of removing every just cause of complaint, and in providing for the strict performance of their duties by the ministers of religion, the House must approach this subject with great caution, and enter upon its consideration, not with the view of gaining mere temporary applause, but of laying a foundation of increased stability for the Church of Ireland. He was prepared to consider a measure of Church Reform, which had that object in view; but as this Bill contained the principle, that Church property improved in its value by an Act of the Legislature, might, to the extent of that improvement, be applied to the purposes of the State, and as no hope was held out of the abandonment of that principle, he could not assent to a measure which was in his opinion, unjust towards the Church, and which sanctioned a principle dangerous to the security of all property, whether lay or ecclesiastical, corporate or individual.

Lord *Althorp* admitted, that it was very dangerous to assert any principle which interfered with any established right of property. He could not, however, admit, that there was any analogy between Church property, and that of Corporations—and still less was there any between it, and the property of individuals, which came to them by inheritance. In the case of the holders of Church property, they obtained their rights neither by inheritance nor purchase, but by the arbitrary choice of the Crown, or of certain individuals who held the right of appointing them. The right hon. Gentleman, he understood, did not object to converting Bishops' leases into perpetuities, but he objected to appropriating the increased value thereby given to the property to the State. But the right hon. Gentleman objected principally on account of the smallness of the amount, and seemed to admit, that he would have no objection to it, provided the amount were considerable. After that admission, he did not understand how the right hon. Gentleman could object to the principle, or say it was inequitable or unjust; all that he was entitled to say was, that it was impolitic. The right hon. Gentleman agreed, too, in the principle, that the Church cess ought to be abolished, but objected to the mode of providing for that expense. For his part he did not see, if it were to come out of the property of the Church, as the right hon. Gentleman admitted, why it should not come out of the revenues of the clergy. He believed that, in principle, he and the right hon. Gentleman agreed; and he should be happy to take into consideration, in the Committee, any objections the right hon. Gentleman might make to the details. The right hon. Gentleman had objected to the graduated tax on the incomes of the clergy, and had quoted the observations which he (Lord Althorp) had made against a graduated Property-tax. But between a graduated Property-tax, and a graduated tax upon the incomes of the clergy there was a great difference. The right hon. Gentleman objected to the reduction of the Bishops—that it would not leave enough, when the Bishops were attending their duties in Parliament, to attend to their episcopal duties in Ireland. But if that argument were applied to English Bishops, all of whom were in attendance in Parliament during its sittings, while only a part of the Irish Bishops had seats in the other House, the argument would have much more force. The right hon. Gentleman had proved too much. After the Bill had passed, the number of Bishops in Ireland, in proportion to the revenues of the Clergy, and to the number of benefices, would be much greater in proportion than the number of Bishops in England. In his opinion, the number would be large enough. As to the expansive power of Protestantism to which the right hon. Baronet had alluded, that expansive power would, he believed, be increased as they removed the abuses which he had always understood, prevented it from rising and spreading over the land. The large number of Bishoprics was one of the burthens that confined it, and kept it from spreading. After the number of Bishops was reduced, it would be found, on comparing the number left in Ireland, with the number in England, that the former would be in proportion much larger. Of course he did not admit, with the hon. member for Oxford, that they were not to touch the Bishops at all. Looking at their duties, he thought that the number left would be sufficient. Looking, too, at the benefices, he was of the same opinion. The revenue of the Irish Bishops was 130,000*l.*, and the revenue of the parochial clergy was 600,000*l.*; the revenue of the English Bishops was 160,000*l.*, and the revenue of the English parochial clergy was 3,000,000*l.*; which showed, that the Bishops of Ireland would be quite enough. The great number of Bishops was one of the causes of discontent and dissatisfaction. He could not concur, therefore, with the right hon. Gentleman in his objection to reducing the number of Bishops. He felt bound to state, in conclusion, that to the alterations which had been suggested by the right hon. Baronet, his Majesty's Government would object, and he therefore could not complain, that those Gentlemen who desired those alterations, should divide against the second reading of the Bill.

Colonel *Conolly* said, he was induced to oppose the measure then before the House on two grounds—he viewed it as a spoliative, as well as a most arbitrary measure. The grounds upon which the spoliation of the property of the Church was sought to be justified were of so wretched and miserable a description, that he was astonished how the right hon. Gentleman, the Secretary for the Colonies, with his splendid talents, could condescend to resort to arguments that were not sustained by anything like legitimacy of purpose. He was most happy to join his humble tribute of admiration to the eloquent declaration of the right hon. Baronet, the member for Tamworth, as to the respectability of the Protestant Church of Ireland. No feeling was nearer his heart, than the wish to see the immunities and privileges of that Church handed down to posterity pure and unfettered. The Bill now before the House he considered particularly objectionable, as he thought the principle involved in it must finally prove destructive to all property. And let not hon. Members suppose, that the property of the Established Church in Ireland could be endangered, without the Established Church in England participating in her ruin. He considered the present measure as a sacrifice at the shrine of agitation. He would maintain, that it was an off-set to the measure which had been passed for the purpose of supporting the King's Government in Ireland. It had been called by his Majesty's Ministers a remedial measure, and even considering it in that point of view, he was satisfied it would not have the effect of tranquillizing the country. Permitting the property of the Church to be spoliated in the present instance would only tend to aggravate the ills of Ireland, and increase the desire for further spoliation; and he considered, that his Majesty's Ministers were, by their conduct, pandering to the revolutionary and destructive appetites which they could never satisfy. Independently of the demerits of the Bill—and upon those grounds alone he was strongly bound to oppose it — independently of its demerits—he considered it unworthy of support, on the ground, that no necessity existed for its enactment. His Majesty's Ministers had greatly exaggerated the amount of the Vestry-cess. In the remission of that impost he cordially concurred, and a fund could be raised to meet the amount without diminishing the number of the bishoprics; he thought it right that such a plan should be adopted, but his Majesty's Ministers, by confounding the Vestry-cess with other parochial charges with which it had nothing whatever to do, had made it appear to be a much heavier burthen than it really was, and they had estimated it at a sum nearly double its amount. Should it be necessary to reduce the number of bishoprics at all, it appeared to him, that one-half the number of sees proposed to be despoiled would answer. He was of opinion, that some of the smaller sees in the agricultural districts could be better dispensed with than those of the larger districts, such as Cork, Kilkenny, and Waterford. In these cities were the seats, dioceses, and county parochial charities, and in Waterford alone there were charitable institutions which required the superintendence of the highest functionaries. They were, in fact, all left by the pious and charitable individuals by whom they were founded under the charge of the Bishop, and here he could not avoid paying the tribute of his admiration to the memory of those individuals whose splendid bequests had effected so much for the relief of the poor of that town. There was another part of the Bill to which he entertained an insuperable objection. He referred to that part of it which levied a tax upon livings of 200*l*. a-year. When he called to mind the summary manner in which that tax was to be levied, he could not but view the measure as one not merely arbitrary in its nature, but as one of extortion. It was his business to show the House the cruelty and injustice of the measure which he would characterise as politically unwise and ecclesiastically injurious. Great complaints had been made, and with justice, of the evils arising out of absenteeism, and yet his Majesty's Ministers, by the course they were pursuing, were doing all in their power to increase those evils. His Majesty's Ministers, in joining in the cry against the Church, were sacrificing the best interests of the country [*No, no*]. He would repeat distinctly, that they were facilitating the views of those whose avowed object it was to dismember the empire. Another objection which he had to the proposed measure was, that the vacuum created by the suppression of the bishoprics would be filled up by Roman Catholics. As fast as Protestantism receded, the Roman Catholic religion advanced. He was made acquainted with an instance of this which recently occurred. In the city of Limerick, owing to the infirmities of the respected Prelate, his absence had been attended by the effect described, and the Roman Catholic Bishop now occupied the place which should have been filled by the other. It had been already shown what would take place in Kilkenny and Waterford, should the proposed measure pass into a law. On the whole he must oppose the Bill, as he viewed it as a sacrifice of truth to error—and of Protestantism to Popery.

Lord *Sandon* being met by loud cries of "Question," and "Divide," said, he should stand there till he was heard. He wished to state the reasons for his vote. He agreed in nearly all which had fallen from the right hon. Baronet, the member for Tamworth, and yet he meant to vote against him; and he wished to explain why. There was no one part of the preamble of the Bill in which he did not agree; and the only part of the measure, which could scarcely be called a principle of it, in which he did not agree was, that for the appropriation of an imaginary surplus to arise at some future time, as Parliament might think fit. The noble Lord (Lord Althorp) admitted, as he interpreted the noble Lord's speech, that this part would be a blow to the security of property; and, in his opinion, it was not worth while, for the sake of appropriating an imaginary surplus, to establish a principle which would weaken the security of property. If he could not alter that provision of the Bill in the Committee, he should probably hereafter think it his duty to vote against it. He agreed with a large part of it, and he was anxious to see a reform in the Church—anxious to see the clergy bound to perform their duties; but he wished, by giving this explanation of his vote, to prevent its being supposed by the public, that those who voted for Church reform were pledged to a principle which violated a principle of property for the sake of an imaginary surplus.

Lord *Althorp* begged to explain, that the noble Lord had certainly misunderstood him. He had never said, or thought, that the Bill would in any way endanger property. He had admitted, that an attack upon Church property would endanger other property, but he denied that this Bill was an attack upon Church property.

Mr. Lefroy rose, and was met with loud laughter, and calls of "Question." After a short time comparative order was restored, and the learned Gentleman moved, that the debate be adjourned.

Lord *Althorp* hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman would not persist. They should never be able to decide any question if they went on in that way.

Mr. *Wynn* concurred with the noble Lord in deprecating the adjournment; but he must also deprecate the proceeding of not hearing an hon. Member who wished to address the House, and who was especially called upon to speak on this question. If there were any hon. Member who had a greater interest in this subject than another, it was the hon. and learned member for the University of Dublin.

Lord *Castlereagh* blamed the Ministers for not procuring a hearing for the Members of that (the Opposition) side of the House. The consequence of that would be, that they would all be made Repealers [*cries of* "Question"]. He would not be put down [*louder cries of* "Question"]. He represented a large constituency, and had as good a right to be heard as any hon. Gentleman. The hon. and learned member for Dublin was not to be put down by a sneer or a cough. He had a peculiar right to deliver his sentiments. He would only repeat, that the attempt to put down the Opposition Members would make every one of them a Repealer.

The Speaker put the Question, on the Amendment to adjourn the Debate.

Mr. *Lefroy*, however, withdrew his Amendment, and the House divided on the Question, that the Bill be then read a second time: Ayes 317; Noes 78—Majority 239.

Bill read a second time.

List of the NOES.

ENGLAND.

Ashley, Lord
Ashley, Hon. H.
Bankes, W. J.
Bell, Matthew
Bethell, Rich.
Blackstone, W. S.
Bruce, Lord E.

Chaplin, Colonel T.
Dare, R. W. H.
Darlington, Earl of
Duncombe, Hon. W.
Dugdale, E. S.
Egerton, T.
Fancourt, Major
Finch, G.
Fox, S. L.
Gladstone, W. E.
Halford, H.
Hanmer, Sir John
Hardinge, Sir H.
Henniker, Lord
Herries, Rt. Hn. J. C.
Hope, H. T.
Houldsworth, T.
Jermyn, Earl
Inglis, Sir R. H.
Irton, S.
Kerrison, Sir E.
Knatchbull, Sir E.
Lincoln, Earl of
Lowther, Viscount
Lowther, Hon. H. C.
Lygon, Hn. Col. H. B.
Mandeville, Viscount
Manners, Lord R.
Nicholl, J.
Norreys, Lord
Ossulston, Lord
Peel, Rt. Hon. Sir R.
Pigot, R.
Pollock, F.
Plumptre, R.
Price, Richard
Ross, Charles
Sanderson, R.
Scarlett, Sir J.
Somerset, Lord G.
Stewart, John
Stanley, E.
Stormont, Viscount
Villiers, Viscount
Welby, Glynne E.
Williams, Robert
Williams, T. P.
Wood, Colonel
Wynn, Rt. Hn. C. W.

SCOTLAND.

Arbuthnot, Maj.-Gen.
Gordon, Hon. Capt. W.
Hay, Sir J.
Johnston, A.

IRELAND.

Archdall, General
Bernard, Hon. W. S.
Bateson, Sir R.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cole, Viscount
Cole, Hon. A.
Conolly, Col. E. M.
Corry, Hon. H. L.
Gladstone, T.
Hayes, Sir E.
Lefroy, A.
Lefroy, T.
Maxwell, Sir Jn.
Maxwell, H.
Meynell, Captain H.
O'Neill, Major-Gen.
Perceval, Colonel
Verner, Colonel
Young, J.

TELLERS.

Estcourt, T. B.
Shaw, F.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, May 7, 1833.

MINUTES.] Petitions presented. By the Earl of LONGFORD, from Longford; and by the Bishop of LINCOLN, from Hughenden,—for the Better Observance of the Sabbath. By the Duke of RICHMOND, by the Marquesses of LANSDOWNE, and BUTE, by the Earls of RIPON, FITZWILLIAM, GREY, GOSFORD, ROSSLYN, RADNOR, and CAWDOR, and by Lord WESTERN, and SUFFIELD, from a great Number of Places,—for the Abolition of Slavery.—By Lord WESTERN, from the Protestant Dissenters of Bocking, to be allowed to Marry without Conforming to the Rites of the Church of England, for Relief from Church Rates; and for an Improved System of Parochial Registration; and from the same Body, for granting a Charter to the University of London.—By the Duke of WELLINGTON, from the Corporation of Waterford, against granting Exclusive Rights to the St. George Steam Company.—By Earl FITZWILLIAM, from the Glasgow Political Union, for a Repeal of the Corn Laws, and all other Laws which tend to enhance the price of Bread.—By Earl GREY, from Roscrea, for an Alteration and Revision of the Criminal Law.

CRIMINAL LAW.] The Duke of *Sussex* rose to present to their Lordships a Petition from the inhabitants of London and its vicinity, agreed to at Exeter Hall; the prayer of which was, that their Lordships would take the Criminal Law into their consideration with a view of ameliorating it. He had the honour last year to present a similar petition to their Lordships, which, like this, was most respectably signed. The present petition had 5,330 signatures; and among the persons who signed were several who had suffered from robbery, and who had proved in their own persons the insufficiency of the law. No man was more anxious than he was to diminish the number of offences liable to capital punishment, but he was convinced that the abolition of those punishments was a subject which required great consideration and care. In changing the punishment, other circumstances must be taken into consideration; as, for example, in what mode were the prisoners to be taken care of? He agreed, therefore, with the petitioners, who wished also to see the subject of prison discipline carefully examined. He was happy to say, that the number of capital convictions had decreased; but the number of persons charged with capital offences, who were acquitted, was particularly instructive. By comparing the number of persons convicted in 1831, with the number of persons acquitted, it appeared that of capital charges, twenty-eight out of 100 were acquitted, while of other charges only eighteen out of 100 were acquitted. That fact proved that the chances of conviction diminished when persons were charged with capital offences. The difference was about eleven per cent. He was speaking of the number of convictions in all England and Wales. In the metropolis, the case was different. The number of convictions in London on capital charges was as forty-four to 100 acquitted, while in non-capital cases it was only twenty. It was, therefore, not the same in London as in all England and Wales. He was sure that the subject was of that nature which required the gravest consideration. He hoped that some ameliorations might take place; but while he was ready to offer their Lordships his best assistance in carrying them into effect, he by no means wished to hurry them under the consideration of their Lordships. He would then only move that the Petition be read at length which was done as follows:

To the Right Hon. the Lords Spiritual and Temporal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled. The Petition of the undersigned inhabitants of London and its vicinity, agreed to at a public meeting, held in Exeter Hall, Humbly showeth—That your Petitioners are deeply impressed with the opinion, that the efficacy of criminal laws depends less upon the severity of punishment than the certainty of infliction; and that laws which cannot be carried into execution without shocking the feelings of society, and exciting sympathy for the offender, are contrary to reason, inconsistent with morality, and opposed to the interests of justice:

That the criminal laws of England are of a character so vindictive and barbarous as to be utterly incapable of uniform execution; and that consequently, under the present system, the lives of men depend less upon the precise and express provisions of law than upon the temper, feeling, or caprice of a Judge, or Secretary of State, whence it arises that all the assizes and circuits throughout England afford examples of inequality of punishment, and practical proofs of the arbitrary discretion exercised in the selection of victims for the altars of sanguinary justice:

That the excessive severity of the law operates to the total impunity of a great proportion of offenders, by deterring humane persons from prosecuting, and by holding out a temptation to Jurors to violate their oath rather than be accessory to judicial murder; while almost all the capital punishments now on the Statute-book are innovations upon the temperate and wholesome principles of the ancient common law of the land, which has ever been admired for its humanity and wisdom by the greatest legal authorities, and is coeval with the noblest and best principles of the English Constitution:

That your Petitioners, therefore, humbly pray your right hon. House to take the criminal laws into your consideration, and, in accordance with what the true interests of justice as well as of humanity require, to introduce such a thorough and efficient Reform of the criminal law as will render it more availing to public morals than to private vengeance, and by a judicious system of prison discipline afford that protection to property of which all persons may avail themselves without purchasing it by the sacrifice of human life.

Lord *Lyndhurst* would avail himself of that opportunity to advert to a subject to which he had taken the liberty of calling the attention of their Lordships some time back. He had then referred to the Act which passed at a late period of last Session, by which persons guilty of offences before capital were subject to be transported for life. He had then moved for Returns to elucidate the operation of that Act; those Returns had since been laid upon the Table, and by them it appeared, that, out of 300 convictions, under that Act of Parliament, there were only ten cases of punishment commuted. He was satisfied, too, by the inquiries he had made into the cases of some of these persons, that further inquiries would have proved that, in these ten cases, the punishment had been remitted because the offences were committed before the passing of the Act. Waiving this consideration, however, and taking the ten cases, they showed that the proportion in which the law had been carried into effect was in twenty-nine cases out of thirty. Taking these returns as a criterion of the whole empire, he said, that to enforce the law in twenty-nine cases out of thirty was a harsh and unjustifiable administration of the criminal law. He did not make any charge against the noble Viscount at the head of the Home Department, but he blamed the clause which had been introduced, and to which was to be ascribed the effect he had mentioned. When the Bill was brought up from the other House it did not contain that clause. It was introduced in that House as an Amendment; and when it went back to the other House for its concurrence, the other House was averse from assenting to it, and only did so from an apprehension that the Bill would be lost if it resisted the Amendment. He might speak of these things because they were matters of history. It was absurd to carry such a law into effect in all cases. Suppose a man tried for stealing *5l.* in a dwelling-house and found guilty, it was imperative on the Judge to sentence him to transportation for life; and the sentence, as the Returns showed, was sure to be carried into effect. The next person might be tried for breaking and entering and stealing, that was a capital offence; and if he were found guilty, the Judge might sentence him to one year's imprisonment and to hard labour. The punishment, then, for the inferior offence, was transportation for life, and for the capital offence, one year's imprisonment. This was an anomaly in the law which ought not to be suffered. And on what ground was the law enacted? It was proposed to make the punishment certain—the punishment certain! In general it was made certain by the discretion of the Court. It was not disputed that punishment was made certain only for the purpose of preventing crime. That was the principle on which the Legislature acted. But it was said, in this case, that discretion was not to be vested in the Court, but one uniform and most severe punishment should be always inflicted. The law applied a fixed punishment to different grades of crime, and the consequence was, that the punishment was not proportioned to the offence. Under the old system, when the discretion was vested in the Court, the Court examined into each case, and apportioned the punishment accordingly. The whole of our system was founded on intrusting the Court with discretionary power. When a party was found guilty of a capital offence, if the punishment were fixed, the Judge must order it to be carried into execution; but that was not the case where he had the power of mitigating the punishment. In all cases of misdemeanor the Judge was left to his own discretion. In all cases of Statutory Law, formerly the Court was intrusted with discretionary power. The whole system of our Criminal Code was founded on discretion, except in that case in which the Parliament had thought it right to take away all discretion under the circumstances stated. If it were right to take away the discretion of the Court, in one instance, that principle should be extended to all cases. If it were right to admit the Court to exercise a discretion, and if that were the general principle of the law, why make this exception? He considered it most mischievous, as well as anomalous, and he entreated the noble Viscount to bring in a Bill to alter this part of the law. He would also take the liberty of suggesting, that the noble Viscount should follow the course marked out by his distinguished predecessor, and introduce Amendments into the general Criminal Law; and if the noble Viscount did that, he would not only do an acceptable service to the country, but add to his own reputation and character. If the laborious duties of his office would allow the noble Viscount he would beg his attention to the criminal laws of the country. He would call his attention to the Returns and to the results which they showed. In the course of the last twenty years crime had increased in the proportion of three to one in this country. In 1812 the number of commitments did not exceed 6,000—they exceeded 20,000 in 1832. Taking the seven years ending with 1818, he found that the whole number was about 60,000; but taking the seven years ending with 1832, he found the whole number was about 127,000. This increase was not confined to any districts—it was the same in the manufacturing towns, and in the agricultural parts of the country; the same in the metropolis and in the most remote parts of the empire. This was not a sudden, but a progressive increase, from one year to another, ever since 1812. He submitted that these were important matters which demanded investigation. It should be shown whether there was any fallacy in the Reports, or whether they gave a correct representation of the state of crime; and if they gave a correct representation, an inquiry ought to be made into what were the causes of those crimes, and how those causes might be avoided.

Viscount *Melbourne* said, that the noble Lord had stated that a harsh and unjustifiable use had been made of the prerogative of the Crown, and he must know that this was a serious—

Lord *Lyndhurst* said, that the noble Viscount was mistaken in his interpretation of what had fallen from him. What he said was, that to enforce the transportation clause, in the manner resorted to, was a harsh and unjustifiable administration of the criminal law.

Viscount *Melbourne* did not see, that the noble and learned Lord's explanation altered the case. The power to mitigate the sentence rested with the Secretary of State, and if its administration were harsh and unjustifiable the fault was his. The principle which those who had called for an alteration of the law had in view—the object which they wished to effect—was to deter from crime by making the punishment more certain; for it had been well ascertained, that when very severe punishments were awarded, the sympathy of the public frequently prevented them from being carried into execution. With respect to the conviction at the Carnarvonshire Assizes, to which the noble and learned Lord had alluded, the punishment in that case was mitigated, precisely according to the recommendation of the noble and learned Lord; and, he believed, that not a single recommendation had been forwarded by any learned Judge to which a due degree of weight and consideration had not been given by the office over which he had the honour to preside. He admitted, that the law, as it now stood, in some degree diminished the power which the Judge formerly possessed, with respect to the cases that were tried before him; but still application could be made to the Secretary of State, and the knowledge which was imparted to that functionary with reference to the previous character of the offender—the information which he received—the list which might be forwarded to him of the previous convictions, if any, of the criminal, enabled those to whom reference was made to decide upon the application better than a Judge could do during the hurry and bustle of the Assizes. The noble and learned Lord had referred to two cases of a very different kind, one in which a comparatively slight offence was severely punished, the other in which a grave offence was passed over lightly. Now, the argument of the noble and learned Lord was precisely that which was formerly urged against the penalty of death in a great variety of cases—namely, the uncertainty of that penalty being carried into execution. The fault was not to be traced to the measure of last Session, but to the state of the law in general. The noble and learned Lord called on him to turn his attention to the amendment of the criminal law. If he could discover any means that would more effectually provide for the due punishment of different degrees of crime—if he saw any means for the attainment of that object, no man would be more ready than he to carry such plans into execution, and to give to the country the benefit of them. The noble and learned Lord had alluded to the increase of crime. That was a most important subject; it required a more deep, a more profound, and a more enlarged discussion than he was prepared to give to it on the present occasion. The question of the criminal law was a most intricate one. The noble and learned Lord well knew, that the arguments connected with it were of a metaphysical character, and the science of mind, if it were a science, was one of the most uncertain, and, at the same time, the most curious, that ever was presented for investigation. He, again, admitted the subject which the noble and learned Lord had introduced to be most important, but with reference to the alterations which had been made in the law, he must say, that no system could be effectual, if its course were interrupted by perpetual agitation, and perpetual condemnation—coming also from those whose opinions must have very great weight, Peers of Parliament and Judges of the land.

Lord *Lyndhurst* said, that, to show the inequality of the law, he had instanced two cases—in one instance, an individual condemned for a minor offence was sentenced to transportation for life; in the other, the person who was next tried, and who was convicted capitally, was sentenced to one year's imprisonment and hard labour. The question was, what was the practical effect of the new system, as compared with the old? Formerly the Judge, in case of conviction, made his remarks in the margin of his notes of the trial, and stated the punishment; but now he must send up to the Secretary of State an account of the proceedings, which, from the number of cases, would often be impossible. The noble Lord had said, this was a new system, and that time ought to be given to see what effects would be produced by it. He did not complain of it as a new system, but as an anomaly, contrary to all sound principles of law.

The *Lord Chancellor* said, that in consequence of what had occurred between himself and the noble and learned Lord, he had inquired whether it was in the contemplation of his noble friend to send a circular to the Judges containing instructions to those learned persons to transmit the calendars, with their remarks, to the Home-office. That he understood would be done; and, he conceived, that such a course would obviate much of the objection of the noble and learned Lord.

Lord *Lyndhurst* said, that he was very happy to hear that such a proceeding was in contemplation.

The *Lord Chancellor:* I think it right, my Lords, in the absence of my noble and learned friend (Lord Wynford), through whose suggestion the amended clause in the Bill, removing the discretionary power from the Judges, was made, to say, on this occasion, that I thought the reasons which my noble and learned friend urged were satisfactory. The clause, I may also add, received the sanction of a noble and learned Lord, now no more (Lord Tenterden), a Judge whose experience was very great. Since the law has been carried into operation, objections have been made to that clause, and I so far yield to them as to say, I think the matter does require consideration; but I do fain hope the authority given to the Judges, in the way pointed out, will have the effect desired. Instead of a regular communication being made to the Secretary of State, it will be sufficient, I apprehend, for the Judge to write on the calendar the punishment he wishes to be inflicted. It may, however, require further consideration, whether the instructions given may not be liable to objections, but if no objections should arise, why then the objections to the clause will be met, and thus removed.

Lord *Clifford* said, that, feeling deeply his inability to engage the attention of the House to what he wished to submit to it, either by power of oratory or by official influence, he would merely call its attention to what had fallen from the noble and learned Lord, who had stated, that, since 1812, the Tories being in power, crime had increased enormously and progressively; that the practice of the Courts during that time had been rarely to follow up conviction with infliction of the sentence; that the noble Viscount had selected stealing in a dwelling-house to commence an experiment upon a new system; that that system had produced 300 convictions; that only ten of them had not been carried into execution, and that, therefore, his Majesty's Government was unfit to manage the criminal law of England. Such sentiments appeared to him to be in opposition to those of the Archbishop of Dublin, in a letter addressed by him to the noble Earl at the head of his Majesty's Government. He would not detain the House, but merely beg their Lordships to look at the Archbishop's work, in which, he thought, their Lordships would find some reason to doubt the wisdom of that specious humanity to which such loud and continual appeals had of late been made.

Lord *Suffield* said, that he had a petition to present upon this subject, and he would mention another fact, in addition to those already stated by the noble Duke—namely, that if their Lordships compared the number of acquittals of persons charged with the same crime at different periods, they would find that, as the number of capital punishments decreased, the number of acquittals diminished. The noble Lord then presented a petition from Lisburn and its vicinity, relative to the salutary changes in the criminal law, during the last Session of Parliament. The petitioners stated, that there were still many incongruities to be removed, and they desired further changes, with a view of more correctly apportioning the punishments.

Petitions to lie on the Table.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, May 7, 1833.

MINUTES.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of Mr. HUME, an Account of all Cash sent from London in 1831, and 1832, for the Supply of his Majesty's Naval Service, and Expense incurred by the sending of the Money: also of the Amount paid to the Royal Marines, and for their Service, in the two years 1831, and 1832, and the Expense incurred thereby: also an Account of the Monies received by the Receiver General of the Droits of the Crown, in the years 1830, 1831, and 1822; and the Emoluments and Salary derived by the said Receiver General from his Office: and the same Amount regarding the Registrar of the Admiralty Court.

Petitions presented. By Mr. HUME, from Nottingham, for allowing the Inhabitants to Elect their own Municipal and Local Authorities; from St. Leonard's, Shoreditch, for a Repeal of the Metropolitan Police Act; from Hammersmith, Kensington, and the Vicinity for a Repeal of all Taxes on Knowledge.—By Sir EDWARD KNATCHBULL, from Romney Marsh, and Brabourne, for a Repeal of the Malt Duty.—By Mr. HALL DARE, from the Justices of the Peace of the Division of Epping, for a Repeal of the Sale of Beer Act.

QUAKERS' AFFIRMATION.] On the Members elected to serve on the Coleraine Election Committee coming to the Table to be sworn, and on the names having been called over, including that of Mr. Pease (a member of the Society of Friends),

The *Speaker* said, I wish to call the attention of the House to the situation in which it is now placed for the first time. I feel it to be my duty thus to arrest the course of its business; but when I have stated the cause of my having done so, it will be for the House to decide what course it will pursue. The reduced list of eleven Members in this Election Committee has now been returned to this House. The Act states, that these eleven shall be embodied into a Committee, and before it proceeds to any business shall be sworn at the Table. One of the Members so returned, the House has decided to be competent to discharge his duties as a Member of the House on making his affirmation. But the question for the House now to consider is, whether that decision necessarily comprehends the duty to be performed by a Member of this Select Committee under a special Act of Parliament. Can the hon. Member sit in this Committee without taking that oath, or doing something else which the House shall decide to be synonymous, and equivalent to taking that oath? In other words, is the affirmation upon which the hon. Member performed the duties of a Member of this House to be considered equivalent to the oath directed to be taken by this separate Act of Parliament?

Mr. *O'Connell:* I rise to move, that the affirmation of the hon. member for Durham be taken as equivalent to the oath required by the Act to be taken by the members of Election Committees. The principle on which we formerly decided that the hon. Member could take his seat, on making his affirmation, clearly governs this case. That decision of ours rested upon the constructions of various Acts of Parliament, enabling the people called Quakers to make an affirmation instead of taking an oath. Those Acts do not expressly contemplate the case of a Quaker becoming a Member of Parliament;

but the House considered it to be implied, and the implication seems of necessity to follow in the present case. The principal Act of Parliament referred to substitutes an affirmation in all cases, with three exceptions—any case not excepted comes of course more strongly within the general rule, and this is not an excepted case.

The *Speaker:* What are the excepted cases?

Mr. *O'Connell:* The excepted cases are, the giving evidence in criminal cases, the being upon Juries, and the holding of emolumentary offices under the Crown. Now certainly this is no office under the Crown. The Committee is not a Jury; nor is it a criminal case that is to come before it. I therefore beg to move, that the affirmation of the hon. member for Durham be received instead of his oath.

The *Speaker:* I am persuaded, that no Member in the House, not even the hon. and learned Gentleman who has just addressed it, will conceive that I was improperly actuated in bringing this matter forward. I am sure he will pardon me also, for my, perhaps, rather disorderly calling upon him to state the exceptions. Of course, the third exception—that preventing the affirmation of Quakers being taken upon entering into any office of emolument under the Crown, never came across my mind. What did occur to me was, whether it was possible any analogy might be thought to exist between this case and that of serving upon Juries, or giving evidence in criminal cases. The hon. Member is of opinion, and probably the House will be of opinion that the case before us comes within neither exception, but looking to the criminal consequences that might occur to parties interested, I feel it to be my duty to bring the fact before the House.

Mr. *O'Connell:* I trust the Chair did not so misunderstand me as to suppose I could say anything that did not recognise, I hardly like to say the propriety, for it is too weak a word, of its interference; for I felt, in common with every Member of the House, that what was done by you, Sir, was perfectly consistent with the whole course of your conduct, and was distinguished by strict impartiality, and a love of justice. It is impossible to doubt the fitness of your calling the particular attention of the House to this case, being the first time of its arising. I have now the Act of Parliament, containing the exceptions before me, and I find them to be what I stated. Having allowed the hon. Member to make the affirmation on becoming a Member of this House, it would be an anomaly, indeed, for the House to decide that more than his affirmation should be required of him to discharge one of its incidental duties.

Sir *Robert Peel* said, that the anomaly might exist, and required to be removed by an Act of Parliament. He did not think the decision they had come to in the former case necessarily governed this, which rested upon an Act of Parliament passed subsequently to the Quakers' Relief Act. He considered, however, that this Committee did not come within either of the three exceptions in that Act; and that, therefore, the hon. Gentleman might be allowed to make his affirmation.

Mr. *Godson* begged to refer the House to the 22nd Geo. 2nd, c. 46, wherein it was enacted that, in all cases wherein an oath was required by an Act of Parliament already passed, or thereinafter to be passed, the affirmation of a Quaker might be received.

Lord *Morpeth* rejoiced at the unexpected occurrence which had taken place, as he had a notice on the books which he trusted would remove all difficulties like the present.

Lord *Althorp* thought, that as the House had already decided that the Act of Parliament did not prevent Quakers from taking their seats in the House, the same rule should apply in the present instance.

The *Speaker* said, that he had only done what he conceived to be his duty in calling the attention of the House to the subject. As the House seemed to feel so strongly, and to concur so unanimously in the reception of the hon. Member's affirmation, he would suggest that the affirmation be received with the consent of the House, but without the formality of putting the Motion of the hon. and learned Gentleman.

Motion withdrawn, the rest of the Committee were sworn, and Mr. Pease made his solemn affirmation instead of taking an oath.

PASSING OF IRISH PAUPERS.] Mr. *Robert Palmer* said, that the subject of the Motion he was about to submit to the House—namely, the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the laws relative to the passing of Irish vagrants—was one which intimately interested the whole community; and when it was considered how deeply affected many of the counties in England were by the operation of the existing laws, he thought it would not be held undeserving the attention of the Government and the House. The extreme expense attendant on passing the Irish poor from one country to the other was well known, and had frequently been brought under the notice of the House. In 1828 a Committee was appointed to investigate the subject, and that Committee made a report which it was thought would have provided for the expenses of various kinds incurred by the passing of the Irish labourers in that year; but after the presentation of the report, the Bill had been withdrawn. A Bill on the same subject had also been introduced during the last Session of Parliament, but he was not aware that it had passed the House. In order to show with what a degree of pressure these charges weighed on the different counties in England, he would refer to the returns, which showed the number of persons passed during the last five years, and he was very sure that when the House heard the statement they would come to the conclusion that some legislative measure ought to be adopted with regard to this subject. In the county of Berks alone, for the last five years, the number of Irish labourers passed rose from 2,272 to 4,559, and the expenses incurred by that county for this purpose rose also from 815*l.* to 1,135*l.* annually. These returns showed an annual increase in the number of persons passed since 1828. In the county of Wilts a similar increase was observable, while in Gloucestershire the expenses varied from 1,200*l.* to 1,400*l.* annually. Without detaining the House by any further detailed statements, he would just quote what were the average expenses incurred by a few of the English counties during the last five years. In Hertfordshire, 783*l.*; in Northamptonshire, 756*l.*; in Warwickshire, 958*l.*; in Staffordshire, 1,687*l.*; in Cheshire, 900*l.*; in Berkshire, 855*l.*; in Wiltshire, 1,000*l.*; in Gloucestershire, 1,285*l.*; and in Lancashire, where the Returns were only reckoned for the last four years, 1,689*l.* It had been ascertained, that almost all the individuals thus passed had come from London. Now, admitting the influx to be unavoidable, many questions would arise as to what was the best mode of preventing the great expense thus created. He had no hesitation in saying, that the cheapest possible mode, provided it were an efficient one, ought to be adopted. By the 59th Geo. 2nd, c. 12, power was given to Magistrates to remove Irish paupers, and that Act specified the manner in which they were to be removed, which was in the mode required by a former Act, the 17th Geo. 2nd, c. 5. But Magistrates acting under those Acts had no power to remove Irish paupers in any other mode than the way specified in them, or to charge the expenses of the transportation in any other manner than that pointed out. He thought the noble Lord would agree with him as to the expediency of altering the laws on this subject altogether. He could see no reason why a person born in Ireland should, by the mere circumstance of a six hours' sail, be placed in a different position as to his claims on society; or why his means of support should be so greatly altered. He believed the House would agree with him in the view he took of the matter, and would concur in the propriety of appointing the Committee of Inquiry; which inquiry should be taken up from the period of the existence of the last Committee, in 1828. He proposed that the inquiries of the Committee should be directed to ascertain the best mode of altering the laws to which he had referred. If, however, the noble Lord (Lord Althorp) would promise to take the matter into his serious consideration early in the next Session of Parliament, with a view to an alteration, he would not at the present moment press the subject further than moving the appointment of a Committee, which he believed, under the circumstances, to be the best course he could follow. The hon. Member concluded by moving for the appointment of a "Select Committee to inquire into the law relative to the passing of Irish vagrants, with a view to its Amendment, and to report their opinion thereon to the House."

Lord *Althorp* had no objection whatever to the appointment of a Select Committee, but would not at present pledge himself to any particular course.

Mr. *Cobbett* trusted, that in any law which should be proposed to the Committee, due consideration would be given to the situation of the persons spoken of. The people of Ireland were left comparatively destitute of food, although their country furnished two of the largest counties of England, Yorkshire and Lancashire, with great quantities of provisions; regard should therefore be had to the circumstance, that Ireland sent much of her subsistence to England; and it ought to be remembered, since Ireland sent so much of her food to

England, that great consideration was due to those Irishmen who came to England in search of food. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. R. Palmer), seemed to suppose, that the burthen of passing Irish paupers fell principally upon the counties and agricultural interest. He verily believed, that more of the burthen fell on the single parish of Kensington, containing 14,000 persons, than on the whole county of Berks. That was not the case of Lancashire, a manufacturing county, which paid more than the seven other counties through which the road to Liverpool passes. In that county the towns of Manchester and Salford paid more than the whole county of Bedford. The towns he believed bore the principal part of the burthen.

Colonel *Wood* said, a great part of the evils complained of arose from the application of the Vagrancy Act to casual poor in the metropolis and other places. The parishes, in order to relieve themselves from the expense of passing them, described them as vagrants, and thus saddled the counties with the expense. The short remedy would be to make the parishes remove their own Irish and Scotch paupers, and that the natives of the three divisions of the kingdom should be placed on the same footing.

Lord *Duncannon* said, it was a great hardship to send the Irish poor over to a country where they had no means of relief but by begging their way through their own country or returning to this. He agreed with the hon. member for Oldham, that great consideration ought to be given to the peculiar circumstances of Ireland.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, that so long as the Parliament of this country oppressed Ireland as they had done, so long must the people of Ireland hate and detest it; and certainly no Parliament that had ever existed in England was deserving of more indignation and hatred on the part of Ireland than the present, which had done so much against and so little for that unfortunate country. Until justice instead of injustice was done to Ireland, the account between the two countries could not be settled; and unless something was done to ameliorate the condition of the Irish people, the Government might rest satisfied that Ireland would never be other than a source of daily embarrassment to them. In England the population had increased, between 1821 and 1831, at the rate of fifteen per cent, while in Ireland the increase for the same period did not exceed eight per cent. Much had been talked about a superabundant population in Ireland, but he was prepared to show, that instead of an increase there had been in many places, a considerable diminution in the population of that country. Like the negroes of the West Indies, the Irish people had decreased in point of number, and although this was an unpalatable doctrine, it was nevertheless the true one. Ireland was capable of maintaining a population of 19,000,000; but until the proprietors of the soil were identified with the country, it would be hopeless to look forward to anything like real prosperity. In the time of Edward 3rd an ordinance was issued, prohibiting persons from holding land in England and also in France; and without some such law was adopted with respect to Ireland, there was no possibility of escaping from the evils of absenteeism and non-residence. He should propose that English proprietors should give their Irish possessions to their younger sons, or have the option of selling them; and although he admitted the difficulties in the way of such an arrangement to be almost insuperable, still he saw no other way of rescuing Ireland from the thraldom and misery in which it was placed. It had been said, that the introduction of Poor-laws would afford employment to the Irish poor, but this he denied. Poor laws might, to be sure, give them food, but it was his opinion that such a system would not only render them idle, but take away from them the means of labour. No less a sum than 8,000,900*l.* was annually expended for the support of the poor in this country. The Government, including all persons paid out of the public purse, from the King on the Throne down to the lowest constable, only cost 16,000,000*l.* so that a sum equal to half the amount of the whole public expenditure was lavished upon the poor without either, as far as he could see, bettering their condition, increasing their comforts, or promoting their happiness. But the expedient of Poor-laws for Ireland might lead to a species of litigation between the countries which was little dreamed of. Suppose, for instance, an action was brought by an English parish against an Irish parish, in an Irish court of law, what was likely to be the result? The agents and counsel on both sides would no doubt be benefited; but what would the proceedings cost the parishes? Why it might so turn out, that the transmission of a single pauper would cost more in law expenses than would be sufficient to support the poor of either parish for a whole year. He would not oppose the appointment of a Committee, but he was convinced, that its labours would not be attended with any useful or practical result.

Mr. *Robert Palmer* said, it was not intended that the Committee should inquire into the extent of relief that ought to be given to Irish paupers, but only as to the best means of providing for the expense of their removal.

Motion agreed to, and Committee appointed.

CROWN LANDS—MESSAGE FROM THE KING.] On the Motion of Lord Althorp, his Majesty's Message brought down on May 6th, was read as follows:—

"WILLIAM R.

"His Majesty being desirous that an inquiry should be made into the state and condition of the woods, forests, and land revenues belonging to the Crown, in order that the same may be rendered as beneficial and productive as possible, recommends it to the House of Commons to take the subject of these revenues into their early consideration, with a view to the adoption of the most effectual means for the attainment of this important object. "W. R."

Lord *Althorp* observed, that although there could be no doubt that much exaggeration had taken place with respect to the value of the woods, forests, and land revenues, belonging to the Crown, yet that it was certainly desirable that an inquiry should be made into their state and condition, with a view that they might be rendered as beneficial and productive as possible. The course which he intended to pursue was, in the first place, to move an Address to his Majesty in answer to his Majesty's most gracious message, and afterwards to propose the appointment of a Select Committee on the subject. The noble Lord concluded by moving "that an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, thanking him for his most gracious message, and assuring him that the House would take the subject into immediate consideration."

Mr. *Harvey* said, he had always thought that the time of that House would be most economically and usefully employed by attending to one subject at a time. Very soon after he had become a Member of the House, he had adverted to the subject of the Crown Lands; and four years ago had pressed the House to inquire into the real state and condition of the property in question, respecting which he had submitted to the House much information, acquired by considerable inquiry and labour. He was very glad to find that his Majesty's Government were now disposed to take up the question. He was personally glad on the occasion, because he had given notice of a Motion on the subject for next week; and he was happy, that he should be saved the trouble, and also that the time of the House would be saved. All that surprised him was, when he called to mind the surrender by his present Majesty, in the speech which he made at the commencement of his reign, of his interest in the hereditary revenues of the Crown, and of the manner in which that surrender had been dwelt upon by Ministers as a most liberal act, that two years and a half had been allowed to elapse without any step having been taken on the subject. It was, however, better late than never. There could be no doubt whatever that considerable advantage might be derived by the public from the investigation of the subject. The noble Lord thought that the value of this Crown property had been greatly exaggerated. It might be so. Where darkness was thrown over objects, it was difficult to ascertain their exact dimensions. But when he saw the magnificent establishment in Whitehall-place, when he saw the distinguished persons who presided over that department of the public service, when he saw that even the hereditary Counsellors of the Crown did not hesitate to become land-surveyors, and to cast their eyes over the royal territory and domains, he was compelled to believe that the matters to which such persons directed their attention must be of considerable importance. That the Aristocracy of the country had greatly diminished this property, since it was surrendered by the people to the Crown, in the reign of William 3rd he was quite aware. Some great families possessed at the present moment noble estates derived from it, for which they had given very trifling consideration. In truth a very small part of the revenues of the Crown lands came into the Exchequer. From the year 1794 to the year 1804, 580,000*l.* had been received, of which only 10,800*l.* had come into the Exchequer. From 1725 to 1826, 2,374,321*l.* had been received, of which only 8,760*l.* had come into the Exchequer. From the year 1826 to the year 1829, 1,500,000*l.* had been received, not a shilling of which had been paid into the Exchequer. If, therefore, there had been, as the noble Lord supposed, some little exaggeration in the value of these revenues, there was evidently a foundation for extensive and beneficial inquiry. When the noble Lord, the other night, had a difficulty to find five or six millions which were cut from under his feet by the partial repeal of the Malt-tax, and by the menaced repeal of the House and Window Duties, he might have found in the Crown lands an ample fund for meeting the chasm in his resources. He would only have had to go with the Act of Parliament in his hand into the Money Market, and he might have raised five or six millions on this property. There was another advantage to which this property was applicable; why not create ten or fifteen millions of notes, to be called Crown-land notes, to be received and paid in taxes, but not to be convertible into gold at all? The noble Lord was about to appoint a Committee. He would not find that sufficient. Such a Committee would have to send individuals to make inquiries in every county in England, and in many counties in Ireland, and to call witnesses before them from all quarters, which it would be impossible to do without great delay and serious expense. He had no doubt that it would be found more expedient to appoint Commissions to go into every county, and find out all about this property. In the year 1786, several Commissions of this nature, composed of three or five persons each, were appointed, and made some most valuable and important reports. If those reports had been followed up, instead of the Crown property having been misapplied, it would now be worth double its present amount. What he suggested, therefore, was, the appointment of a Commission. He had paid a great deal of attention to the subject, and he was satisfied that the Crown lands might be judiciously, though gradually, converted into a sum of money that would not fall short of fifteen millions. He suggested as the best mode of facilitating the disposal of this property, that half the purchase money should remain on mortgage, at two and a half per cent. It was important entirely to get rid of the establishment attached to this property, and to the expense of the collection of its revenues, which amounted to twenty per cent. He had no doubt, if the subject were followed up as it ought, the property might be made one of our most useful resources in time of need.

Mr. *Hume* was glad that the subject was to be inquired into, and hoped it would be extended to Ireland and Scotland.

Lord *Duncannon* said, it had occurred to him that the House would prefer having the question referred to a Committee in the first instance, but if a Commission were then found necessary, his Majesty's Government would not object to it. The hon. member for Colchester had stated, that large sums had come into the Treasury of the Woods and Forests, from 1826 to 1830, which had not yet been brought to the public account. The hon. Gentleman must be aware that a heavy debt had been contracted under the authority of Parliament, which must be paid before the money could be made available for other purposes. He believed the whole amount was 1,500,000*l.* Last year a sum of 250,000*l.* was paid towards it, and in the present year another 100,000*l.* would be appropriated to the purpose. With regard to the expense of collection the hon. Gentleman was misinformed, for it did not exceed half the sum which he had stated.

Mr. *Cobbett* thought, that the Commissioners of Woods and Forests had done very wrong in wasting all this property in beautifying streets, and building houses and fine palaces in the metropolis. Of all the mistakes ever fallen into by the Government, none was greater than that of expending large sums of money on this particular spot. Instead of accumulating and adding to the crowd of idlers in London, it ought to be the object of Government to diminish the attractions of the spot. As it was, however, something was taken away from every part of the country, in order to enlarge London. The building of the Penitentiary was a most unwise measure. It cost a million of money, and a number of persons were brought up to London to assist in its erection. What he rose, however, to observe was, that as soon as possible, efforts should be made to recover Crown property which had unjustly got into other hands, in order to enable the Treasury to take off some of the taxes. The hon. member for Colchester valued the property at 15,000,000*l.* He (Mr. Cobbett) was more sanguine. He had known a trifle paid for a very valuable estate. Now, they all knew that when a steward had unjustly disposed of his master's property for a small consideration the landlord's remedy was in the Court of Chancery. In the case of the Crown lands the country should have its Court of Chancery—namely, that House. The leases, fines, and all other circumstances ought to be strictly inquired into, and if it were found that Crown property had been sold or let for less than its value, the agreement ought to be cancelled by Parliament. Fraudulent contracts ought not to be permitted to endure. He was born on the borders of a royal forest; and he well remembered, when he was young, that it was full of fine and lofty timber. Many thousands of acres of trees were, however, struck down, lopped, barked, and then disposed of; and it was not improbable that Government had been treated on that occasion as Lord Peterborough had been treated by his steward, who knocked down his house, sold the materials, and then brought in his Lordship a bill for repairs. There had been enough wood cut down in that forest of Holt to have supplied the Royal Navy for several years. He hoped that the hon. member for Colchester would be a member of the proposed Committee, and that the Committee would go into the consideration of the subject honestly, without any respect to persons, and with a determination that the public should have justice done them.

The Motion for an Address in answer to the Message agreed to, and a Select Committee subsequently appointed.

SAVINGS BANKS ANNUITIES' BILL.] Lord *Althorp* rose to defer the third reading of this Bill until to-morrow, not being completely prepared to announce all the alterations that might be desirable in it.

Mr. *Thomas Attwood* expressed his disapprobation of these Savings' Banks. He believed they were instituted by the late Lord Liverpool and the Government at the time, not for the good of the people, but for three different purposes. The first was to draw capital to London, in order to bolster up the funds; the second was, to give the Government the power of putting their hands into the pockets of the people; and the third, to enable them to scourge the people. [*"Oh! Oh!"*]. Hon. Members might express disapprobation as much as they pleased, and the noble Lord might laugh, but his firm belief was, that the great object of Lord Liverpool in this transaction was to get a claw on the people.

Lord *Althorp* was astonished that the hon. Member, in addition to these three charges, had not made another, and imputed to Government the introduction of the Savings' Banks Bill, because they wished to realize profit by means of the fractional parts, which could not be taken into account in every money transaction. When the hon. Member imputed to Government three motives for establishing Savings Banks, he might have smiled, but certainly it was not on account of the originality of the hon. Member's ideas, because he had heard something like the same topic urged some nights ago. He was, indeed, quite astonished to hear such arguments coming from the mouths of hon. Members. So far from being an injury to the people, he believed these banks conferred on them the greatest advantages; and, so far from affording the Government the means of trampling on the people, and scourging the people, as the hon. Member expressed it, they had the very contrary effect. Their evident effect was, to render the people independent; and, surely, persons of that description were not the most likely to be trampled on.

Mr. *Shaw* could not help expressing his astonishment at the expression made use of by the hon. member for Birmingham. The hon. Member, he believed, had the kindest intentions towards the poor; but he must say, he took the strangest way of showing those intentions by prejudicing the people against disposing of the little spare money they had in a way which was most likely to render them independent and comfortable. He was opposed to the Poor-laws; the hon. Member he believed was in favour of them, and he would just leave it to himself to say which of the two systems were the most likely to cherish independence.

Mr. *Slaney* thought, that nothing showed more the good sense and proper feeling of the lower classes than the preference they gave to Government Securities over country bankers. The hon. Member had probably heard the story of Franklin about the two sacks. The empty sack, he said, fell to the ground, but the full sack stood upright. Surely the more property the people had, the more likely were they to be independent. He was happy to find that, though during the crisis of last Session the amount of deposits had diminished, they were now daily increasing.

The third reading of the Bill deferred.

SHERIFFS' EXPENSES.] Mr. Fysche Palmer moved that the Sheriffs' Bill be read a second time.

The *Solicitor General* said, that, he was decidedly opposed to the plan of throwing the expenses of the office of Sheriff upon the county rates. There was now an understanding between the Sheriffs and Under-sheriffs, the latter of whom agreed to bear the expense; and there were fees of office which enabled them to do so. The expense might always be limited, at the pleasure of the person who held the office, and it would be hard to make the farmer and the occupier pay expenses incurred at the discretion of an individual.

Sir *Edward Knatchbull* perfectly agreed with the hon. and learned Gentleman, and hoped that the Bill would be withdrawn.

Mr. *Cobbett* said, that if the expense amounted to 600*l.* now, it would amount to 6,000*l.* if the charges were paid out of the county rate. It was an office of honour, and should continue to be so.

Mr. *Richard Potter* trusted, that no expense would be thrown upon the counties connected with the office of Sheriff, and if Gentlemen of suitable fortune were appointed, there could be no necessity whatever for so doing. He agreed with several hon. Members that respectable attorneys in some counties were anxious to undertake the office of Deputy, and free the High Sheriff from all charge. In the county he was connected with (Lancashire), it was well known that, on a gentleman being appointed to the honourable and ancient office of Sheriff, there were always numbers of most respectable solicitors eager to become the Sheriff's Deputy, and free him from all expense whatever. In ordinary times the gain to the Under Sheriff was generally about 1,000*l.* He entirely agreed with the hon. member for Oldham, that if the expense was to be paid by the counties, instead of its costing 600*l.* or 700*l.*, the charge in time upon the counties would be as many thousands.

Mr. *Strickland* said, in the county which he represented, the expenses of the Sheriff were never less than 1,500*l.*, and very frequently amounted to 2,000*l.*, which was a very serious expense to fall suddenly upon any gentleman. He did not say, that these expenses were necessary, but they were customary, and had so long been customary that it was impossible to avoid them. The javelin-men, who had been so frequently mentioned, were in ancient times a sort of military body absolutely necessary to escort the Judges through every county: because, in early periods, the entrance of the Judges into a county town was often attended with considerable danger. That danger, by the progress of civilization, had passed away; but the custom and the expense had continued. Parliament might, now that the necessity for their existence had ceased, very properly interfere to abolish them. Though he did not exactly approve of the Bill itself, as it was now framed, he thought that the hon. Member who had introduced it deserved great credit for having brought before the House a subject of much abuse.

Mr. *Fysche Palmer* had not brought in the Bill upon his own responsibility, but at the recommendation of a Committee previously appointed to examine into the subject. Many of the abuses now relating to the nomination of Sheriffs would be done away by the bill, and on the whole he thought it would be a benefit to country gentlemen.

Bill read a second time.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Wednesday, May 8, 1833.

MINUTES.] Bill. Read a second time. On the Motion of Lord AUCKLAND:—Personal Estates; Cotton Wool Duty Repeal.

Petitions presented. By the Earls of LICHFIELD, and ALBEMARLE; and by Lord SUFFIELD, from a great Number of Places,—against Slavery.—By Lord DUNDAS, from Falkirk, for an Alteration in the present System of Church Patronage (Scotland).—By Lord COLVILLE, from Irvine, for a Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By Lord SUFFIELD, from a Baptist Congregation in the City of London, for an Improved System of Registration, and for Relief from the other Grievances under which Dissenters labour.—By the Marquess of CAMDEN, from the Clergy of Canterbury, against the proposed Measure of Church Reform in Ireland.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, May 8, 1833.

MINUTES.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of Mr. PENDARVES, an Account of all the Copper and Tin Imported into, and Exported from the United Kingdom, in 1832.—On the Motion of Mr. BALFOUR, an Account of the Sums remaining unpaid in Ireland for additional Duties on Spirits under 1st William 4th, cap. 49, on the 5th April, 1832, and on the 5th January, 1833; the same for Scotland.—On the Motion of Captain ELLIOT, a Copy of a Letter of the 4th of May, 1833, from the Commissioners of Greenwich Hospital to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty: also an Account of the Quantities of Copper Sheets and Bolts respectively rolled in his Majesty's Dockyards of Woolwich and Portsmouth, in 1830, 1831, and 1832; the same of Iron; and an Account of the Aggregate Expense incurred by the managing of the Estates in Cumberland, Durham, and Northumberland, belonging to Greenwich Hospital.

Bills. Read a third time:—Dramatic Authors; Savings Banks Annuities. Read a second time:—Dwelling House Robbery; Privy Council. Committed:—Law Amendments.

Petitions presented. By Lord JOHN RUSSELL, from Brixham, for an Improvement in the Highways Bill.—By Sir OSWALD MOSLEY, by Sir W. INGILBY, by Sir G. GREY, by Sir T. LENNARD, by Sir WATKIN WYNN, by Sir FRANCIS VINCENT, by Sir CHARLES BURRELL, by Lord JOHN RUSSELL, by Colonel GORE LANGTON, by Messrs.

Locke, Barnard, Marshall, Ewart, James Buller, Gilbert Heathcote, G. W. Wood, Murray, Ryle, Cuthbert Rippon, Gillon, John Heathcote, Wilbraham, Richard Oswald, and Joseph Denison, from a great Number of Places,—against Slavery.—By Mr. Richard Oswald, from Auchinleck, for an Inquiry into the Distress of the Working Classes, for the Repeal of the Corn Laws, and for an Alteration in the System of Church Patronage in Scotland; and from Beith, for a Repeal of the Septennial Act.—By Mr. Wilbraham, from Wilton-cum-Swambrooks, for Assessing Mines for the Relief of the Poor; and from Nantwich and Sandbach, for Relief to the Dissenters from their present Oppressions. —By Mr. Gillon, from Johnstone; and Mr. R. Oswald, from Auchinleck, for a Separation between Church and State.—By Mr. Gillon, from Aberbrothock, against the Royal Burghs (Scotland) Bill.—By Mr. Hutt, from Hull, for a Repeal of the Timber Duties.—By Mr. Murray, from the Coopers of Leith, for a Repeal of the Duty on Stamp Receipts.—By Mr. Colquhoun, from the Hand-loom Weavers of Auchinlech, for a Board of Trade; and from Kirkintilloch, for Relief and Inquiry into the Distress among the Hand-loom Weavers.—By Mr. O'Connor, from Middleton (Cork), for the Abolition of Tolls and Customs at Fairs and Markets in Ireland.—By Mr. Marshall, from the Medical Practitioners of Leeds, for an Alteration in the Apothecaries' Act.—By Sir William Ingilby, from Caistor, for a Reduction of the Duties on Hawkers, Pedlars, and Petty Chapmen.—By Sir W. Ingilby, from several Places, for a Repeal of the Duty on Malt.—By Captain Wemyss, from the Port of Limekilns (Fife), for a Committee to Inquire into the State of the Shipping Interest.—By Sir W. Ingilby, from Willoughby-cum-Slootheby, for the Abolition of Tithes; and from Belchford, for Appropriating some part of the Rents of the Land allotted in that Parish in lieu of Tithes to the support of the Poor, and the Repairs of the Church.—By Sir Oswald Mosley, Captain Wemyss, and Messrs. J. W. Buller, Byng, and R. Oswald, from several Places,—for the Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By Sir Oswald Mosley, Mr. R. Walker, Mr. Byng, and Mr. Wilbraham, from several Places, for the Repeal or Alteration of the Sale of Beer Act.

Restrictions imposed by Private Bills.] Mr. Wilbraham, in bringing up the Report of the Committee, containing Amendments to the Birkenhead (Cheshire) Improvement Bill, moved that they be read a second time.

Mr. *Richard Potter* begged to be permitted to make a few observations before the Report was received. On the Committee meeting to whom this Bill was referred, they were told, that as there was no opposition, the Committee need not be detained. A Petition had been presented against the Bill numerously and respectably signed. It was said, there was no necessity to read it; it was, however, read, The Committee then proceeded with the Bill, and he believed he was justified in saying, that the cases were rare in which a Bill had received so many and such important and necessary alterations as the Amendments in the hands of the Speaker would show. As the Bill stood, the vacancies of Commissioners were to be filled up by the remaining number, so that in a few years they would have been a self-elected body. The Committee had fixed that all future elections should be by the inhabitants rated at 10*l.* per annum. Rates to a considerable amount were to be levied, but there was to have been no publication of the accounts, and the Committee in consequence fixed that they should be printed and published. No person was to be eligible to be a Commissioner unless he occupied premises of the actual value of 60*l.*, or was possessed of property of the value of 2,000*l.*; the Committee reduced the amounts to 30*l.* and 1,000*l.* Tenants were liable to be distrained upon for paving the streets to an unlimited amount. The Committee decided that they should only be liable for the amount due, the landlords being held responsible. The Nuisance Clause actually occupied nearly six pages. The most trifling thing was declared a nuisance; such as boys playing at marbles, &c. &c.; and such offender, were he unknown, might be seized, taken before a Magistrate, and fined 5*l.* A great deal of this petty legislation was struck out. Loitering in the streets was also declared a nuisance; so that a poor Irishman, just arrived from Ireland, in passing through Birkenhead, and looking at a shop window at articles exposed, as he naturally would, might have been seized and sent to prison. Many other Amendments were also made. He (Mr. Potter) took the liberty of making these observations; and would, with great deference, but most earnestly, entreat hon. Members to whom private Bills were referred, to look through them, whether they were opposed or not. He was a new Member, and hoped he should not be considered presumptuous in giving this advice.

Mr. *Wilbraham* said, those remarks did not apply to the Bill as it stood at present, but to the Bill as it was originally framed. Most of the alterations had been made at the suggestion of the hon. Member (Mr. Potter) himself, and therefore he had no ground of complaint.

Amendment read a second time.

Gravesend Pier.] Sir *Edward Codrington* presented a Petition from the Watermen of Gravesend, praying to be heard by Counsel against the Gravesend Pier Bill. The hon. and gallant Admiral stated, that since the Second Reading of that Bill he had been to Gravesend, and was enabled to state his decided opinion, notwithstanding the opinion of the Admiralty Board to the contrary, that a projection like the proposed pier, which extended 205 feet in the river, and into a depth of twenty-seven feet at high water, would be highly injurious to the navigation. He thought, also, that that was the real opinion of the Board of Admiralty, for he believed that they were now prosecuting the persons who erected a projection near Woolwich, which only extended ten feet into the river. Besides the injury to the navigation, the watermen were entitled to some consideration, for they were generally persons who had been impressed, and passed the best part of their lives in the navy, many of them being disabled and dismissed without pensions. One man, after coming home with him after the battle of Navarino, with the loss of an eye, applied to him for remuneration; and on his forwarding the application to the Admiralty, he was told that the man who had only lost an eye was not disabled from service, although he had always understood that the loss of an eye entitled a man to compensation as much as the loss of a limb. After that the man lost the other eye, having also had six wounds, and the only reward he could obtain for the poor fellow was 6*d.* a-day. If that was the way the Admiralty remunerated disabled seamen, he thought it was time to inquire into all other classes of pensions. If the country was so poor that it could not afford to reward such men, let the same course be adopted with regard to all other persons, and he would, for one, if necessary, serve his country for nothing. He had been led thus into the subject, because the House would recollect how men had been pressed for the navy during the war. If a man were a good likely-looking sailor he was immediately pressed, whilst recruits were wheedled into the army by bounties of 17*l.* or 18*l.*. The sailor, however, was seized, confined as a prisoner to the ship, and at last driven into accepting a bounty of as many shillings as the soldier got pounds, and after all when he had become blind, he was put off with the miserable pittance of 6*d.* a-day.

Sir *Robert Inglis* rose to Order. He thought the gallant Admiral was wandering from the question in making an irrelevant attack, not only on preceding Administrations, but on the present Ministry; and that the subject of the petition did not warrant his going into the topics he had introduced.

Sir *Edward Codrington* considered that he was quite in order in alluding to the situation of that class of persons who would be most grievously injured by the proposed Bill. It was important to them that they should be heard by Counsel against it. Besides this he had only urged this objection to the impediments which would occur by the erection of the pier. It must be well known to many Members of that House, that sometimes a single tide would fill in the harbour of Dover, and that the backwater would subsequently clear it; but the pier intended to be put up would impede the flood-tide, and also the return-tide and backwater, so that the navigation of the river would be put in great jeopardy.

Captain *Elliott* said, he had been called up, by the observations of his hon. and gallant friend, to say a few words on the subject. The gallant Admiral had objected to the pier, because it would throw a number of persons out of employment who had peculiar claims for the consideration of the House; and because the pier would be an impediment to the safe navigation of the river. The pier at Woolwich, to which the Admiralty had objected, was a solid piece of masonry, and therefore formed a positive impediment; but the Gravesend pier was to be built upon iron staunchcons, which would admit of the flux and reflux of the tide. With respect to the pension of 6*d.* per day—

The *Speaker* considered that any discussion on the principles of pensions was out of order.

Captain *Elliot* would not go further into the subject, than to say, that the sailor referred to had been examined by a medical officer, who had recommended that he should go for a time into the hospital, as there was a hope that his sight would be restored.

Petition referred to the Committee on the Gravesend Pier Bill.

TITHES — PARISH OF UTTOXETER.] Sir *Oswald Mosley* stated, he had a Petition to present of rather a novel character, as it related to tithes of a particular parish —the parish of Uttoxeter, in Stafford. Although the tithes (amounting to 1,200*l.*) were amply sufficient for the purpose of remunerating the incumbent, and although they were vested in the hands of the ecclesiastical body—namely, the Dean and Chapter of Windsor—yet they were some way or other applied to other purposes, and the incumbent, who was the working minister, had only the paltry pittance of 20*l.* a year, with the Easter dues, which were too small to attend to a parish of 5,000 souls. He was obliged to keep a curate out of his small salary; and, if he had not some little private property of his own, he would not have enough to live upon. The tithes were originally granted to the Dean and Chapter of Windsor, for the moral and religious improvement of the poor of the parish, but instead of being applied to these purposes, the Dean and Chapter had stated they could not tell what use was made of them; and, therefore, the petitioners prayed that an inquiry might be directed, to see they were applied to those purposes for which they were originally intended. The petition was signed by all the respectable inhabitants of the parish. An hon. Member of that House (Mr. Tyrell) was stated to be lay impropriator, and, consequently, the receiver of the greater portion of the tithes.

Mr. *Tyrell* explained, that he held the tithes under a lease from the Dean and Chapter of Windsor; that he had received the property by inheritance, and not liking it, had endeavoured more than once to dispose of it for a suitable consideration, but had not been successful. He had now let the tithes, but not till he had made every effort to come to an arrangement with the parish on the subject.

Mr. *Edward Buller* called the serious attention of the House to the statements of the petitioners, which were of the greatest importance to the interests of the Church as well as to the public. It was the existence of such things that was shaking the foundations of the Church, which might be a national blessing.

Mr. *Cobbett* said, the hon. Member appeared not to be aware, that one-half of the tithes in the kingdom belonged to lay-impropriators. Perhaps he was not aware of that. Such, however, was the fact, and to get rid of the inconveniences arising out of this would be very difficult indeed; too difficult, he feared, for the King's present servants to undertake. With regard to what was said about the Dean and Chapter of Windsor, he (Mr. Cobbett) would only remark, that the Dean and Chapter of Winchester had been accused of similar things; and they had sought to justify themselves by alleging that the Aristocracy had a larger share of the Church property than they had. They did not content themselves merely with general statements, but they also mentioned by name many of these Church cormorants, and they gave the name of one nobleman who was said to receive more of what was called Church property than the whole of the twenty-six Bishops, while his conduct was such, that the inhabitants of one parish had been obliged to sue him at law to make him repair the broken windows in the Church. With regard to the tithes of this particular parish, they were as much private property as any other species of property derived from the same source, and he did not believe that the House would act so unjustly as to interfere in the case of Mr. Tyrell, while others were allowed to retain their property.

Petition to lie on the Table.

Affirmation of Quakers.] Lord *Morpeth* rose to submit his Motion to the House for leave to bring in a Bill to allow the Affirmation of Quakers to be received in all cases in which oaths were at present required to be taken. At present Quakers were only disqualified from two offices—namely, any office under the Crown, and from serving on juries; he proposed that the Affirmation of Quakers be received in all cases, and thereby they would be qualified to do that from which they were now debarred. His Bill would also prevent the repetition of those trifling delays which had recently taken place in that House on the hon. member for South Durham (Mr. Pease) taking his seat, and again yesterday when that hon. Member was ballotted to serve on an Election Committee. Looking at the question upon general grounds, he could not see how a Legislature that had taken away the necessity of an oath from this religious class, in cases of life and death, could stop short in admitting them to all the privileges, and immunities of the State, from whose imposts and support they were not exempt; and to which they contributed so much by their industry, enterprise, good order, and wealth. There could be no expectation, whilst the state of society continued as it was at present, that the Quakers would be called on to take a seat in the Cabinet. From the naval and military departments and generally from the service of the State, they would continue to be excluded by their own tenets; but there were many places which they were well qualified to fill, and to which they might prudently aspire. He would illustrate this by relating a circumstance which came immediately under his own notice, connected with this subject, and which, indeed, had first impressed his mind with the necessity of having those disabilities removed. He remembered the case of an individual, a native of Barnsley, in Yorkshire, who had been introduced to him in consequence of his taste in literature. This young man was in a humble walk of life, and a vacancy occurring in the

Post-office department in Barnsley in consequence of a recommendation from him, and a representation in favour of the individual, signed by almost all the respectable inhabitants of Barnsley, his Grace the Duke of Richmond (the Postmaster-General) appointed him to the office. But it turned out that as a Quaker he could not take the oath required to be taken previous to his entering the office. The young man then wrote to him saying his objection to taking the oath had offended some of his friends, but he could not commit a cool deviation from what he conceived to be his duty, without embittering every hour of his life. He begged the pardon of the House for troubling them with this statement, but it was only an instance of what might occur any day in any part of the kingdom, and he hoped the measure he was about to introduce would have the effect of preventing its recurrence. He had originally confined his intentions to the point of eligibility to office, and he had extended it more in deference to the views of others than his own. As to the Quakers, he had never heard a wish or suggestion on their part to be allowed the privileges his measure was intended to give. Though he took up this subject from a feeling of justice towards them, he stood forward not as their advocate but as the advocate of the community. The Quakers were a highly useful and sensible class of men, and would doubtless make excellent and intelligent Jurors. Giving them power to become Jurors would be a sensible and agreeable relief to those who were at present liable to serve on Juries. It appeared that there was but little doubt as to the present state of the law upon the subject of Quakers serving on Juries, they were liable to be summoned, and in some cases they had actually been so. There was an instance in the county of York, where a Quaker served upon a Jury at the Assizes at York; and the same man was afterwards prevented, on the ground of his being a Quaker, from serving on a Jury at the Quarter Sessions in the same county. At the late Assizes at York, a respectable and very opulent Quaker was summoned there to discharge the duty of a Juror. He applied for release on the ground of being a Quaker, and his consequent inability to serve; his application was refused, and he was kept dancing in attendance at a great distance from his own home and business, and without profit to any body, because he did not eventually serve. At the Admiralty Sessions in the Old Bailey on the 27th December last, Robert Channens was indicted for wilful murder on the high seas. A Quaker went into the box to serve on the Jury—an objection was taken; it was over-ruled, and the trial proceeded. The prisoner was found guilty. On a subsequent day he was called up to receive judgment, and his counsel took an objection to the verdict. He was represented to have said, that he knew of no alteration in the law, that every or any subject could not be tried for any crime, unless it was on the oaths of twelve men. In the present instance, it would appear that only eleven men had been sworn. The learned Judge proceeded to pass sentence, and said the objection should be taken into consideration, and it was referred to the whole of the Judges, who decided that the objection was good, and that the trial was not legal. The man had certainly solved the difficulty, by dying in the mean time in prison. The hon. and learned member for Chester (Mr. Jervis) seemed to infer that there was a difference between civil and criminal cases, and that a Quaker might be compelled to serve in civil, but not in criminal cases. He could only say, he could discover no such discrimination in the law. At all events, he thought there was sufficient uncertainty and anomaly apart from the distinct and positive reasons on which he grounded his Motion, to make the adoption of the measure highly desirable. He could not, however, quit these judicial topics without stating how glad he was to find himself countenanced by very great and very recent authorities. At the late Assizes for the county of Durham, one division of which was so ably represented by his hon. friend (Mr. Pease). Mr. Justice Alderson closed his address to the Grand Jury, who had been appointed to try the same question, with these words:—'It has been declared, no 'doubt on the best ground, on the authority of an Act passed in the 22nd, 'year of the reign of George 2nd, that the 'affirmation of a member of the Society of 'Friends is to be taken in a Court of Justice, 'where an oath is to be taken, as an equivalent to an oath by other persons. The consequence is, that Quakers may now serve 'as constables, or in any similar office; 'and I dare say I shall very soon see 'the day when Quakers will execute the 'duties of Grand Jurors and other duties 'in the same way as others do. That is a 'desirable circumstance, for I do not see 'why they should retain to themselves any 'immunities, when all those privileges 'hitherto withheld from them have been 'granted to them.' It appeared, then, that Mr. Justice Alderson both anticipated and approved of the present Motion. He knew it had been thought that the strong opinions entertained by members of the Society of Friends with respect to capital punishments might interpose some obstacle to their taking part in the administration of the criminal law, however, that objection did not apply to them exclusively, but equally to many other sects. As Moravians were coupled with Quakers in all recent Acts of Parliament, he proposed to include them also in the operation of this Bill. The case of that class of religionists called Separatists was already in the competent hands of the hon. member for Cambridge. He believed it was thought that both that hon. Gentleman and himself should have extended their object. He hoped that none would object to the definite and practical, though perhaps narrow plan, although they did not endeavour to fill up a more magnificent, though less definite outline. The right hon. member for Finsbury (Mr. R. Grant) admitted when he brought forward his Motion on the subject of the Jews, the propriety of doing away with all remaining disqualifications that pressed on Quakers. He did not mean to insist upon the disqualifications which he proposed to remove as a flaming grievance, or his Motion, as one of transcendant relief, but he would call upon the House to adopt the measure at the same time on high grounds, when he reminded them, that if they consented to this Bill, they would sweep away the last disability on the Statute-book imposed by positive enactments, or religious scruples; and he was not without hope that not only would there be no opposition, but that no time would be lost in forwarding the Bill. The noble Lord then moved for leave to bring in a Bill to allow Quakers and Moravians to make affirmation in all cases where an oath was now required.

Motion agreed to.

NEWRY ELECTION.] Sir *John Byng* having been Chairman of the Committee appointed to inquire respecting the Newry Election, had to move according to notice, and according to the Resolution of the Committee, that an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, to give directions to the Attorney-General for Ireland to prosecute Mr. James Lisle for corrupt practices at the said election.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, that there could be no doubt that the individual in question ought to be prosecuted, since he was the person who, without the candidate's own consent, had sought after him, had brought him forward, and had returned him; but there were other persons besides Mr. Lisle who might have been guilty of bribery and corruption at the Newry election, and he recommended that the Attorney-General should be invested with a discretion to prosecute any other individuals who, in the course of his inquiries might appear to him to have been culpable.

Mr. *Baring* did not mean to oppose the Motion, but he could not avoid remarking on the different practice of the House in the Stafford and in the Newry cases. In the latter case, the one individual charged with bribery was ordered to be prosecuted; in the former case a Bill of Indemnity was brought in, in favour of all the persons charged with the same offence.

Motion agreed to.

GENERAL REGISTRY OF DEEDS.] Mr. *William Brougham* rose to move for leave to bring in a Bill to establish a general Registry of Deeds and Instruments relating to Real Property; and said, that the importance of the question rendered it necessary for him to trespass on the attention of the House, for a short time, by entering into some details. No measure proposed for the Reform of the Law, was of greater importance than that which he was about to propose; and there was none, he was convinced, which would lead to greater benefits. He should feel considerable hesitation in grappling with so important a matter, did he not know that it had already been under the consideration of Parliament, and discussed with a minuteness which left little either of information or of argument to be supplied. The question was brought before the House of Commons in the time of the Commonwealth, and was then defeated. Cromwell then stated, that he must abandon the measure, because the sons of Zernich (meaning the lawyers) were too strong for him. Subsequent Parliaments had noticed the matter, though nothing was done until the appointment of the Real Property Commission in 1828. That Commission consisted of eight distinguished members of the legal profession, with the present Solicitor-General at their head, and, after investigating the subject with the greatest possible care and minuteness, they drew up a Report, in which they recommended that a general registration of all deeds in the kingdom should be adopted. In conformity with this recommendation, and for the purpose of carrying it into effect, his hon. and learned friend, the Solicitor-General, brought in a Bill last Session, and the measure which he rose to ask leave to introduce, differed only in a slight degree from that Bill. His hon. and learned friend's Bill arrived at a second reading, and was referred to a Committee up-stairs. That Committee, of which he was Chairman, sat twenty-nine days, and called before them the most eminent members of the profession resident in London, and requested persons interested in the question, but especially those opposed to it, to come forward, and state their opinions. After maturely considering the evidence, the Committee drew up a Report, in which they state as their unanimous opinion that a general register of all deeds and instruments affecting land, would be of decided advantage, as regarded large purchases; and with respect to smaller transactions, they considered that if the cost of registration could be so adjusted as to be comparatively small upon purchases below a certain value, the system of registration would be made perfect, by being made applicable to all lands without reference to value. The subject having been thus maturely considered, he was relieved from much of the embarrassment he might otherwise labour under, for he felt that he was only urging the adoption of a plan which had already obtained the sanction of persons the most capable of forming a correct judgment upon the subject. At the same time he was bound to admit that the change which the plan would introduce into the law of Real Property was so great, that Parliament ought not to sanction it, except upon the most ample proof of its utility. He put the case upon that issue. If the House of Commons did not think the objections to the present law sufficiently powerful to warrant the adoption of this measure, let them reject it; but as far as his own opinion went, it was in accordance with that of the Committee. The doubts which daily arose in all questions of title, and which would go on increasing, if the law, relative to the transfer of real property, should continue in operation, amounted to a great evil, and appeared to him to call for a remedy. Among all the plans which had yet been proposed, there was no one which would completely answer the purpose, except the adoption of a general registry of all title-deeds. The heavy expense which the existing law entailed upon every man who purchased land, had long been felt as an intolerable grievance, and he believed that no measure could be devised which would more effectually tend to shorten deeds, and facilitate the transfer of property, than the measure which he had undertaken to recommend to the House. One of the grievances connected with the present system which had been put most prominently forward, was that of the accidental loss or wilful concealment of deeds. When a man made a purchase, an abstract of the title was delivered to him in which reference was made to all the deeds in the possession of the vendor; but it repeatedly happened that deeds were noticed in the abstracts which the vendor had it not in his power to produce, or, having it in his power, chose to conceal. The professional gentlemen with whom he had conversed on this subject, had stated to him that they had found cases of fraudulent concealment of deeds comparatively rare. One gentleman who had been fifty years in the profession, said, that in the course of his practice, he had not met with more than six cases of that description. It was fair to state that fact, because it made against his case; but he had reason to believe, that wilful concealment of deeds occurred more frequently than that Gentleman supposed. He could not give the House a more convincing proof of this fact, than by stating that a practising barrister of the Court of Chancery, who, not being a conveyancer, had comparatively few titles brought under his eye informed him that during the short period of five weeks from the 11th of March last, to the 15th of April, no less than five such cases had fallen under his notice. The first was a case of property, mortgaged under two different titles, without notice to either mortgagee. In the second, a sum was borrowed on the security of an agreement for a lease—the lease itself being afterwards taken, it was mortgaged, suppressing the transaction on the agreement. The third was a case of a mortgage in fee, by a tenant for life, under a settlement—the settlement being withheld. The fourth, was the case of land, settled on a man for life; he suppressed the settlement, and devised the land, as if he had been tenant in fee; the settlement afterwards came to light, and the devisee was ousted. In the fifth, the land was mortgaged, and then sold for its full value; a settlement was afterwards discovered, which has destroyed the title both of the mortgager and purchaser; because, there were grounds for fixing them with constructive notice. Now, with five cases of fraud, in as many weeks —coming under the notice of a gentleman, whose chief business was not the investigation of titles, was it possible to believe, that if the attention of professional men were directed to the subject, they would not find cases of fraud far more numerous than they were now apt to suppose? Although that ground, by itself, might not be sufficient to make them change the whole system of the law in transferring lands, yet, it being of no unfrequent occurrence, it was one ground for legislating; and undoubtedly, if they were to devise a cure for this evil, there was no one sufficient to meet every possible case of fraudulent concealment, except a general record of every deed and instrument, relating to land—open to the inspection of those who were about to deal with the property, and furnishing the surest safeguard, that no other deed or instrument, affecting the title, could by any possibility, exist. But it was not from causes of fraudulent suppression of deeds alone, that the greatest inconveniences arose; by far the most numerous—the daily cases which occurred to defeat or embarrass titles—were those which he had continual opportunities of seeing—he alluded to the great difficulty which almost every seller found in producing or obtaining the deeds necessary to verify his abstract of title. The first step taken by a vendor was to deliver to the purchaser, or to his attorney, a document containing a statement, of the different deeds by which he deduces the title to himself. Presuming the title to appear good in law, upon the face of this abstract, the next process was, to verify the different steps in the title, by comparing the deeds at length with their contents, as abstracted. Now it scarcely ever happened, that there was not some deed missing, lost, or mislaid, or in the hands of a mortgagor, or other person having some interest, and who would not produce it—or, when the deeds mentioned in the abstract were produced, there might be a recital which disclosed the existence of some other deed; and as such disclosure fixed the purchaser with notice of its contents, it was necessary, for his security, that he should see it, in order to be satisfied that it contained nothing affecting the title; and it would not do to rely upon length of time as a bar; for, there were cases of estates recovered after an adverse possession of a century and a half, and even longer. So that there was no safety unless the purchaser could see the actual contents of all the deeds which had ever been executed with reference to the estate he was about to buy; and the difficulty, or the impossibility of doing this, was not the worst part of the case; for the attempt was attended with delay, expense, and vexation, harassing beyond all conception. A man anxious to become possessed of the land, might accept what conveyancers call a tolerably good holding title; but was that enough? Ought not every man to have a right to a good marketable title? Was it enough to say, "You may safely buy this—the chances are 100 to one against this or that deed being found —against any adverse claimant starting up under this settlement or that will, of which we know nothing except that it exists somewhere." Had a purchaser a right to no more than this? Had he not rather a right to a clear and unimpeachable title, such as he might carry into the market, and transfer, as a fundholder transferred his stock? This vast and daily occurring evil, arising out of the non-production of deeds, was only to be cured by having a public record of all instruments, to which the purchaser might be referred, where he might at a glance see the whole of every transaction which had ever been had, relating to his purchase—and might buy, with the full assurance that no other deed could by possibility exist, to defeat or affect the title. The saving of expense in all transfers, too, would be great; for a general registry would not only make titles safe, but would enable men to transfer their property with facility, and at small cost, compared to what they paid at present. When a man wanted to sell his land, he took his title deeds to an attorney; purchasers too would not buy except through the medium of a professional man. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, both parties employed professional men. The attorney for the vendor made out an abstract of title, for which he charged a certain sum; this abstract was delivered to the purchaser's attorney, who scrutinized it with a jealous and watchful eye, from a laudable desire to protect the interests of his client. First, there was the examination of the title, to see that it was properly deduced; then came the verification of the abstract, with all the difficulties he had referred to; then came professional charges for time, and correspondence, and journeys, and attendances, and fees to counsel, and opinions of conveyancers as to the necessity of calling for this or that deed, or whether they might be safely dispensed with—and negotiations with the vendor's attorney as to who should pay for office copies of certain instruments, or who should be at the expense of searching for others, as to abatement in the price, because a deed was not forthcoming, or a slight taint is thrown upon a portion of the title, with various other things; incurring an expense large in every purchase, and in many little short of the whole value of the property! If all deeds were registered, these evils would be avoided, for a purchaser could go to the office without a solicitor, and compare the abstract with the deeds themselves, and learn, to a certainty, the nature of the title which he wished to obtain. He was aware that the remedy which he proposed would be important in its consequences and expensive in execution; but the question to be decided was, whether the evil was of sufficient magnitude to justify them in resorting to the remedy. And he begged leave to call the attention of the House to the safeguards at present afforded by law with respect to the title to real property. Many members of the profession contend that there was, under the present system, a sufficient security for titles afforded by what are called outstanding terms. He was aware that, in touching upon this branch of the subject, he should find it difficult to make himself intelligible to those who were unacquainted with legal technicalities. An interest in land might be severed into two estates; the one—called the legal, the owner of which was the only person recognised on the common-law side of Westminster Hall: while another man might be the equitable owner, and alone entitled to the beneficial enjoyment of the estate, and its rents and profits. The rights of this person, who was, in fact, the real owner, were recognised in Courts of Equity alone. Now, take the case of a mortgage, in which the mortgager created a term of 1,000 years, on condition that if the money be paid back within a certain time, generally six or twelve months, the term should cease. If this were done, the legal estate in the term becomes united with the equitable estate, but if the mortgage money were not paid off within the time, the legal estate in the term became absolute, and could not get back to the mortgager without an actual reconveyance. Here, then, the legal estate was in the mortgagee, the equitable in the mortgager, and so it continued, although the money might be afterwards paid off. Suppose the mortgager to sell, a purchaser would require a conveyance of the legal, as well as of the equitable estate, and he would, therefore, insist upon having the outstanding term of 1,000 years conveyed either to himself, (in which case the two estates became again consolidated) or to a trustee for himself, in which case the two estates were still kept apart. The latter course was always recommended by conveyancers, because the legal title, which had its origin from the date of the mortgage, becomes, by a rule of law, paramount to every charge, or alienation, or incumbrance, which might have been made by the mortgager, between the date of the mortgage and the time of the sale; and, consequently, if the purchaser had the equitable interest transferred to himself, and the legal estate conveyed to his trustee, he might set at defiance all mesne incumbrances, the equitable interests of which are equal to his own in justice, and prior in point of time, but who had not the good fortune to be possessed of the legal estate, and who were, therefore, defeated by the last purchaser, under the maxim, "that when the equities are equal the legal estate shall prevail." Hence, in all transactions relating to land, is was the first duty of a purchaser to get hold of all the outstanding terms in order to protect himself. But this was only to be done at an expense, which was frequently enormous; the title to the legal must be deduced as much, at length, as the title to the equitable estate; and, as this applied to every outstanding term, there might be one equitable, and a dozen of legal titles to be investigated. He had seen upon the table of a conveyancer one abstract of the equitable title, and twenty-five abstracts of different outstanding terms, and so necessary were those to the goodness of the title, that the purchaser would have been most unwise if he had omitted to get in any one of them. These outstanding terms undoubtedly afforded a great protection to purchasers, at the expense of much trouble and money, and of no little injustice to any unfortunate man whose purchase or charge was prior in point of time, but who had omitted to get hold of the legal estate. But the protection which costs so much time, and trouble, and expense to maintain, might not, after all, be worth the parchment it was written upon; for, from the lapse of time, a court of law might presume a surrender of the term, or, what was more likely, the purchaser might have either actual or constructive notice of any one of the prior charges or incumbrances, in which case his turn went for nothing, and he must take his place according to the date of his own transaction, under the maxim *qui prior est tempore, potior est jure;* was the House aware what constituted notice? It was not alone what a man had seen with his own eyes, or heard with his own ears, but it was what his attorney might have known, or ought to have known; and if he employed a country attorney, who transacted the business through a town agent, then whatever the town agent, or the town agent's clerk knows, might have known, or ought to have known, was notice to the unfortunate purchasers, whose title might thus be defeated, notwithstanding all the boasted protection of the outstanding term which he had got in at so much labour and cost. This safeguard might then turn out to be, when obtained, very inadequate, and it would give little real protection, as compared with that which a general registry would afford. Besides, legal terms were by no means universal; there were many properties, particularly house-property, where the legal was not severed from the equitable estate, so that at best it was but a partial protection. There could not be a doubt that there was no greater benefit likely to be conferred by the adoption of a general registry than the getting rid of these outstanding terms; conveyances would be shortened, expense diminished, and, above all, security given, by the removal of every doubt or taint that could in any way affect the title. Another great evil which would be cured by a general registry was this: A person might mortgage his estate to A, afterwards to B, and subsequently to C. Suppose the estate would not bear the whole of these three charges, according to justice and equity, C, who lent his money last, ought to suffer, because he had lent upon an insufficient security. But he might save himself from this predicament by paying off A, and taking A's mortgage to his own, by which he got hold of the legal estate; and squeezed out the unfortunate B, who had nothing but his prior equity to depend upon. It would avail him nothing, however, because a subsequent, but more active incumbrancer had got hold of the legal estate, and could use it as a means to deprive him of his security. That was an evil of every day occurrence. It is obvious that a register of deeds would prevent that mischief; because both A and B's mortgages would have appeared upon the title; C, before he lent his money, would ascertain whether money had previously been advanced; and finding that there were already two charges, he would not lend at all, except he had ascertained that the estate was of sufficient value to pay all three incumbrances. The opposition to the measure had chiefly arisen from solicitors, for whom he entertained the highest respect, and who were a most useful and honorable class of men, but he must protest against the misrepresentations which had been made by some of that body, both as to the nature and object of this measure. It had been stated, that it was the object of the Bill to have all existing title deeds sent to London, to be there deposited. His hon. friend, the member for Yorkshire, had endeavoured to alarm the country gentlemen, as to the consequences of carrying this Bill. His hon. friend seemed to suppose that all title-deeds were actually to be sent to the register-office. His hon. friend might set his mind at rest on that subject, as there was no intention of touching a single existing deed. The measure was altogether prospective, and was only to take effect as regarded deeds executed after the establishment of a general register-office, unless, indeed, parties chose to register their old deeds. He had no doubt that this would be done in many instances, as it would serve as a protection against loss—and in cases where one man holds the deeds when several besides himself are interested in the property, it would be of the greatest possible advantage for such of the owners as could not command the originals, to have a duplicate deposited in the office. The deeds to be registered were those made after the passing of the Act; and, as it was the very nature and chief object of the plan that deeds should be registered at full length, so it would be found unnecessary, after the system had been some time in operation, to disclose more of the title than the simple fact of the conveyance, whether by sale, mortgage, or otherwise; which would tend to shorten, as well as simplify, all deeds. It had been stated, that to put on record all deeds connected with land, would expose a man's affairs, which might be attended with serious inconvenience to him. It would undoubtedly be a serious objection if a number of idle persons could go into the register-office and examine what incumbrances a gentleman had on his property. But before a person would be allowed to examine the register, he must show that he had an interest in doing so, and he would subject himself to a penalty if he proceeded to search having no such interest. But such an evil was more in imagination than reality. No inconvenience had ever resulted from the existence of a register of ships, in which mortgage transactions of the most delicate nature, as affecting a man's credit, were exposed. No evil resulted from a public register of annuity deeds, or of wills, by searching which, any one might for a shilling learn how a man had disposed of every shilling of his property. Another objection had been stated, that by establishing a register-office, the greatest impediments would be thrown in the way of the transactions of country bankers; and it would prevent persons borrowing sums of them by depositing their title-deeds. He should be unwilling to dispute or disparage the value or convenience of that security, although it was a means of getting rid of the Statute of frauds, and evading the Stamp-duty. It was a transaction which constantly took place, and was often attended with considerable benefit. But what was the nature of the transaction? At present the money was advanced on the reliance that the party applying for it was a man of honour, and not on the title, which, after all, might turn out to be no title. It was advanced on the confidence which the lender had in the honour of the borrower, that he would not give him waste-paper instead of real title-deeds. If a general register of deeds were to take place, the country banker would lend upon the assurance of the party borrowing, that no subsequent deed had been registered, as he now lent upon the assurance that the title-deeds he produced formed the whole title to the estate; but with this additional advantage, that, by writing to London, the banker might ascertain, in two or three days, whether there were any charges on the estate in question. If there were not, he might lend his money in perfect security, and, at the same time, the registration of his deed would prevent others advancing money on the property. If the transaction was not likely to be temporary, he would save the expense of a regular mortgage, but retained his full security, by simply entering a *caveat* on the register, which would forbid any dealing with the property until the *caveat* was withdrawn. So far from doing any injury to the borrower, it would be of the greatest service to him, as a man would more freely lend his money when he knew that no one else had advanced money on the estate. The only effect the establishment of a register could have would be, to give a great collateral security to the lender; and he was satisfied, that in such transactions, a very great and extensive benefit would result from the adoption of such a measure as that which he recommended. The plan which he intended to propose, he was aware it was supposed to be intricate, but nothing could be more simple. As an index of names would, in a very few years, become too voluminous for convenient reference, it was proposed that the names of the owners who first deal with the property, should alone be indexed; and that all subsequent transactions should be referred to this head, which was called in the Bill, the "roots of titles;" such reference being made by a number, or letter, marked upon the deed itself. In fact, the plan was a classification of title-deeds; so that all deeds relating to any particular estate might be found under the symbol of that estate. It was an index to lands, and not to the owners; and, therefore, all that was required was, to get the names of the owners who first dealt with the lands, upon the index; and it was obvious that, even this index, which was so limited in its extent, might, in the course of time, be dispensed with; for as soon as a title had been sufficiently long on the register to be good by length of time, it would not be necessary to carry the search so high as the root. Mr. Bell a learned gentleman of great professional attainments and of high reputation at the bar, was formerly opposed to the establishment of a general register, on the ground of the difficulty of finding a practicable plan; but a full examination into this plan has induced Mr. Bell entirely to alter his opinion, and he was satisfied that the scheme of the Commissioners was quite easy, and would certainly be completely successful. A great deal had been made of the mysterious words, as they had been termed, by which the plan had been described in the Bill, and it had been said that a masonic system of symbols had been adopted, with a view to mystify titles and make the index unintelligible. Now, really, it was wonderful to see how sensible men could be led away by a sound. The symbols proposed were, in fact, nothing more than an easy means of reference, so as to prevent the complexity of long and endless indexes. For instance, if there be a deed registered by John Brown, as first owner, the index, letter B, is searched, and the reference found to be letter A, folio 100. The letter A was the symbol, and all subsequent deeds, registered either by John Brown or his successors would appear under that symbol. No name ever appeared but John Brown's. because whatever was afterwards done with the estate, was found by referring to letter A, folio 100. That referred to a book in the office, in which was found, fairly written out, every deed, from the one first registered by John Brown to the one last put on the register. So the deeds, as they were registered, would be indorsed with the letter A, folio 100: and this was the reference by which the owner, or any body he was dealing with, was directed to the whole history of the title, as appearing on the registry. He hoped, therefore there would be no more alarm excited by the fear of masonic symbols, or other mysteries. The measure of registration was no novelty; it existed in Yorkshire and Middlesex, although the systems there were extremely defective. The registration in Scotland, was found to work extremely well. That system differed, in many respects, from that which he proposed should be adopted for this country. In France, Switzerland, Germany, Prussia, Denmark, Holland, in Norway, in Sweden, in Italy, in America, and in the West-India Islands, also register of deeds existed. If, therefore, such a plan existed in so many countries, and was found to succeed, surely it could not be very dangerous to adopt the principle in this country. No country that had adopted a plan of registration had seen reason to abandon it. It had been suggested that, in the place of a general register, in London, there should be a number of register-offices in various parts of the country; but there were a variety of objections to this. By having an office in London, the expense would be much less, a more able body of men would direct it; and the facility of searching for deeds would be greatly facilitated, as they would all be brought under one head. By the adoption of the simple mode of registration which he suggested, any one would be enabled, in the course of an hour or two, to search out for and discover the nature of any deed; so that, if an instruction was sent up to the keeper of the register-office in London to give information as to a deed, an answer might be sent back by return of post; and the rapidity of communication between London and every part of the country was so great, that a search would be sooner made and answered, than if there was a register-office in every county in England. He was fully persuaded that, if Parliament should think fit to entertain the proposition, it would, by establishing a general record of all title-deeds, confer a benefit upon the country more enduring, more widely beneficial in its effects, than would ever be afforded by any other legal Reform which the ingenuity of man could devise. The hon. and learned Gentleman concluded by moving for leave to bring in a Bill "to establish a general registry of all deeds and instruments relating to Real Property in England and Wales."

Mr. *Strickland* had thought, after the general opposition manifested to this measure last year, that all idea of proceeding with it, had been abandoned. He did not mean to say that the attornies in the metropolis might not be favourable to it; but the opposition to the scheme through the rest of England, was powerful and universal. He could not imagine for what object it had now been brought forward, unless it were to throw out a tub to the whale, and divert public attention from such unpleasant subjects as the repeal of the House and Window-tax, and the Malt-duty. As for carrying it, he was satisfied that the hon. and learned Gentleman knew that it was impossible. A proposition for the establishment of a general registry was made in the time of Oliver Cromwell, and all the lawyers then in the House were strongly opposed to it; now, however, many of the learned profession were in favour of a scheme of the sort. In those days, the lawyers were actuated by different motives from those which influence them now, they were then only excited by patriotic feelings to bring forward those plans which they thought would be beneficial to the country, but now they must be paid high salaries for acting as Commissioners, and they exerted themselves to carry measures, the only effect of which could be to increase litigation. The present measure was the first-fruits of a law commission, which had cost the country 28,000*l.*, and it was impossible to tell what further expense might attend it. If any of his Majesty's Ministers had been present, he should have impressed upon them the necessity of at once getting rid of these Law Commissions, which kept the country in a state of agitation, and did great injury, by exciting general apprehension respecting the rights of property. The noble Lord the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the question of the currency, proposed a Motion to the effect that this House would not consent to alter the standard of value, as any proposition for that purpose would shake the stability of the money-market. He had no hesitation in saying, that the proceedings of the Law Commissions excited a general anxiety among all the holders of landed property; for every man felt, that they were proposing measures which rendered property uncertain and insecure. He regretted that the hon. and learned Gentleman should have taken up this Bill, after it had been judiciously dropped by the hon. and learned Solicitor General. The hon. and learned Gentleman in the course of his speech, said, that the country attornies and solicitors had been guilty of gross misrepresentations on the subject of this Bill. It was very easy for a Master of Chancery to abuse country attornies when they were not here to protect themselves, but he must say, that the attack was altogether uncalled-for. The opposition to the Bill, however, came from the landed proprietors and gentry of England who were all opposed to it. He had himself presented a petition to the House signed by a very large portion of the landed proprietors of Yorkshire, and, amongst others, by Lord Harewood, Lord Howden, Lord Mexborough, Sir Francis Wood, Sir W. Cooke, and Sir John Ramsden, and by a numerous body of bankers and merchants. The hon. and learned Gentleman said, that the opinions of various lawyers were united in favour of his Bill. He also said, that Mr. J. Bell, a distinguished Chancery lawyer, who was formerly opposed to this scheme, had recently seen reason to alter his opinion. Now he had heard that Gentleman say before the Committee up-stairs, that he did not know of any evils that had resulted from the want of a system of registration. It appeared, however, that the lawyers had obtained new light on the subject, and had found that the greatest evils resulted from the concealment of deeds. It had been stated that a great discovery had been made in a mode of keeping an index by "roots and symbols," which would prevent the recurrence of any confusion or loss of deeds by registration. Mr. Bell however when examined before the Committee above-stairs, when asked whether he understood this method of "roots and symbols" answered "I think I understand it, but I am not sure that I comprehend it." And this was the opinion which was quoted as being decidedly in favour of the proposed measure. If his opinion were asked as to the probable results of a general metropolitan registration, he could not express it more distinctly than in the words of the hon. and learned Solicitor-General, in the First Report of the Commissioners on the Law of Real Property, in the year 1829, and before he must be supposed to have changed his opinion. The passage to which he alluded was this—'We are 'aware of the numerous and weighty 'obstacles to so extensive and novel a plan, 'in a country of so great extent as England, 'where transfers of land are more numerous than in any other part of the globe, 'and where the disclosure of private affairs 'may be dangerous to commercial credit.' But one word more respecting this supposed discovery about "roots and symbols." The Solicitor-General, in the Chair of the Committee undertook the explanation of the system. But he soon became so entangled amongst these roots, that he seized a favourable opportunity to desert the Committee, leaving the Chair to the more youthful energies of the master in chancery. He, however, was likewise shortly lost and enveloped amidst the mazes of these roots and symbols. At last one of the paid Commissioners—the supposed author and inventor of this discovery—was called in: but after a careful investigation the whole scheme broke down—the supposed discovery turned out to be no discovery at all, but only a very confused and unsatisfactory method of keeping an index. Now, if all title-deeds were to be sent up to this great mausoleum—to this immense building,—where would be found law Latin, Norman French, and conveyancers' English; and which, therefore, might more properly be called this Tower of Babel;—there would be an enormous charge on the public for keeping up the establishment. Independent of the salaries and fees to be paid to the officers, upwards of 500,000*l.* would be required for the purpose of defraying the expense of the building. [The *Solicitor General* 20,000*l.*] He had heard that Lincoln's Inn-square was to be purchased, and that an enormous building was to be erected to cover the interior of it: a building sufficiently capacious to contain all the title-deeds, mortgages, wills, marriage settlements, and legal instruments of England must be of enormous magnitude. By the Yorkshire scheme of registration there were deposited only memorials and an Index. But in the proposed plan there were to be deposited not only memorials, but the whole original title-deeds or copies of them. He had witnessed a settlement of a considerable estate, and the writings, from their bulk and weight could not consist of less than a hundred skins of parchment, and yet a deed of that nature was to be sent up free of expense by the mail-coach, to this great mausoleum of parchment. It had been said, that the deeds were not to be retained but copies of them were to be taken; but were the originals to be returned free of expense to the owners? He said it was a lawyer's Bill; the head of the office was to be a serjeant-at-law, and a number of barristers, of four years' standing, were to hold office as deputy registrars, and clerks without number. And these serjeants-at-law, and experienced lawyers, were to put their learning into their pockets, and be reduced to the drudgery of taking copies and keeping an index. As the Bill originally stood retiring allowances were to be granted; but in a subsequent edition of the Bill the word "retiring" was omitted; but pensions were still to be granted. The serious objections, however, were to the principle of the plan. The very circumstance of sending title-deeds up to London, which might be lost, would throw property into utter confusion. Again, a man's title-deeds would be exposed to the examination of any person who chose to investigate them; by this means his property would be rendered insecure, and he subjected to vexatious litigation. He might be told that means would be taken to prevent any one from searching for or perusing a deed without being really interested; but how could that be accomplished? Then it was provided that should a title-deed be lost, or injury sustained by any neglect of duty, the person who might thus be reduced to difficulties or ruin, might bring an action against the chief registrar; but what chance of redress would any gentleman have in pursuing that course; he would have to contend with all the power and influence of the Government, as the action was to be defended by the Attorney-General, and the expense of this defence was to be paid out of the public purse. And what was it short of an insult to tell a person that he might seek redress by contending against such fearful odds, in a system which was thus to tax Ireland and Scotland for registering the title-deeds of English proprietors, or paying damages for their loss. Should the measure be persevered in, that certainly would not be the last time that the House would have to direct its most serious attention to the subject.

The *Solicitor-General* thought, that the member for Yorkshire had advanced nothing like argument against the Bill. The hon. Gentleman taunted his hon. and learned friend with having adopted this measure after he (the Solicitor General) had seen reason to abandon it. He had not abandoned the measure, and he had the most perfect confidence in the benefits which would result from its adoption. The only reason why he did not proceed with it was, because he was connected with his Majesty's Government; and it was not desirable that the subject should be brought forward as a Government measure. He believed, that all the members of the Government were favourable to it; but it was considered better that the measure should be brought forward by his hon. and learned friend than by him. He anticipated that the opposition to this measure would be extremely slight. It would be recollected that the matter was referred to a Committee up-stairs, which consisted of Gentlemen of all opinions and very many of them directly hostile to the principle; but, after a long and deliberate inquiry, the Committee, with almost the single exception of the hon. member for Yorkshire, all concurred in the propriety of the principle of the measure. He would venture to assert, that a majority of the landed proprietors of the country were agreed in the principle of the measure, in holding that it would tend much to their interest if there was a registry of deeds in this country. And, notwithstanding the hon. Member was pleased to designate the register-office as a "mausoleum of deeds," he believed that the general feeling was in favour of one office in the metropolis, rather than of having a number of offices scattered over the kingdom. The chief opponents of the measure were those very active persons, the country solicitors. He was not surprised that these persons should be opposed to the establishment of a general registration, and prefer a number of local registers; if the latter plan were adopted, they would expect to become registrars; and then all the business would be in their hands. He had no doubt that they would be most active and zealous advocates for a local registration. He was not astonished at the opposition of the country solicitors, but he was utterly at a loss to account for the opposition of the hon. member for Yorkshire, and other country Gentlemen. He could not understand upon what principle they acted. It reminded him of the observation of the conveyancer, who said, that he would rather submit to have his bowels dragged out by wild horses than agree to the abolition of fines and recoveries. So the hon. member for Yorkshire in his warmth against a system of registration, would rather submit to anything than consent to support this measure. At present a man could hardly tell whether his title were good or not, as a deed of which he was previously ignorant might be brought to light at any time. What, then, was the object of registration. A man would be able to learn at once whether there were any deeds in existence connected with a property he wished to purchase, or which he inherited? If the deeds did not appear to exist on the face of the register, they would not be allowed. Of course as was said by his right hon. and learned friend, this enactment would have reference only to deeds executed after the passing of the Bill. There were many grievous cases constantly occurring to show the oppressive operation of the present state of the law, as regarded property; his hon. and learned friend had adverted to some cases of this kind; and there would be no difficulty in adding to the list. The great opponent of this measure, before the Committee, was Mr. Preston, the eminent conveyancer; but his opposition was rather to the details, than to the principle. He dwelt on the necessity of being cautious of guarding against alterations in the law relative to real property; but he did not point out any evils that would result from the adoption of this specific measure. The hon. member for Yorkshire, had stated, that he had seen a marriage settlement of 150 skins of parchment. Now, it would be necessary to take a copy of all this; but with a register, he would reduce the abstract of the deed to little more than half a folio. All that was necessary might be described in that space, so that the expense of registry would not be so great as the hon. Gentleman imagined, even in so extreme a case as that. The hon. Gentleman said, this was a lawyer's Bill, and that it was brought forward for the purpose of creating offices with large salaries. He could only declare, that as far as he was concerned, he was not in the slightest degree interested in the matter; for, if he had the opportunity, he would not become registrar, or deputy-registrar, or clerk, in this "mausoleum." The present system was so full of difficulty and risk, that borrowers on real security had to pay much more than they otherwise would. The amount of this tax, which such borrowers had to pay, was much more than a set-off against those evils which the hon. member for Yorkshire said would follow the adoption of the measure before the House. A system of registration already existed in Ireland; now, if it were found to succeed in that country (and there was no doubt that such was the case) there was no reason why it should not be equally successful and advantageous in England. Similar registers existed in France, Germany, America, and other foreign countries, and in each of these States the plan was found to answer. It must, therefore, be shown that there was something peculiar to the people or Government of England which would prevent its being advantageous here. The hon. member for Yorkshire said, that, calculating from the expense of the Yorkshire register, the charge for a general register for the whole of the country would be enormous. He had no hesitation in affirming, that the Yorkshire register was full of jobs; it annually cost not less than 20,000*l.*; but he would venture to say, that, for less than that amount—and with the exercise of a proper economy—a general register-office for the whole country might be maintained. Again, so far from such an institution causing delay, it would prevent delay, in transferring property. Those protracted and tiresome inquiries which it was now necessary to institute would be avoided, as the necessary information could be immediately obtained at the Register office. So far the disclosure would be wholesome; and at the same time, the utmost care would be taken to prevent any information being given to any person who could not show that he had a real interest in the matter. He did not see why England should not have a general system of registration as well as almost every other civilized nation on the face of the earth. All countries where it had been once adopted had uniformly adhered to the principle; and therefore he said that experience afforded every evidence of its utility. The hon. member for Yorkshire referred to the Law Commissions, and the expense attending them, hinting that the proposals for reforms in the law originated in the remuneration given to the Commissioners for their professional aid. He had no hesitation in saying that, as far as regarded himself, the compensation he had received for his services on that Commission, fell far short of what he should obtain for similar professional exertions between individual and individual;—that, in short, if he looked at the matter merely in a pecuniary point of view, he made a very bad bargain in holding the post at all; as it was, however, he was influenced, chiefly, by the anxious desire to do that which was of the most essential importance to the well-being of the country; namely, to amend the laws; and he had laboured night and day for that object. If he should succeed, that alone would be a sufficient reward for his exertions.

Mr. *Duncombe* asked the hon. and learned Gentleman to exclude Yorkshire from his proposed Bill, because he felt satisfied that its operation would not be beneficial to that county. He would not oppose the measure in its present stage, but he should do so afterwards, if Yorkshire was included in it.

Mr. *Pease* thought that, in common courtesy, they ought to allow the present Motion to pass, and that afterwards improvements might be suggested, which, if not attended to, would afford a fairer opportunity of opposing the measure.

Leave given to bring in the Bill.

PENSION TO LORD DUNGLASS.] Mr. *Hume* rose to call in question the right of his late Majesty to grant a pension to Lord Dunglass. The question he was about to bring before the House was one of great importance, because it involved a principle which, if disallowed, would put an end to all sinecures and pensions. The country was staggering under the weight of its burthens, and one way to relieve it would be to repudiate the principle he alluded to. He held a table of pensions in his hand, from which he would select one or two, to show the evil effect of granting civil pensions. There were two sinecures which dated from the year 1694, and which had, calculated to the present time, cost the country 50,000,000*l.* sterling. The sinecures he meant were those of the two Chief Justices in Eyre. Another instance of this system of civil pensions, was the money paid to one of the predecessors of the right hon. Gentleman in the Chair, to Mr. Sergeant Onslow. The money which had been paid to him and his son was 163,000*l.*, which, calculating principal and interest, would now amount to the sum of about 373,000*l.* paid by the country for services he was sure no Member of that House would be willing to pay so highly for. Another instance was the pension of 276*l.* paid to the Earl of Home, the father of the young nobleman whose claims he was calling in question, for services no one knew anything about, and which, calculated with interest from the time it was granted up to the present time, would amount to 36,560*l.* or thereabouts. Happening, in a Committee up-stairs, to make an inquiry as to the disbursements paid out of the Scotch Exchequer, he found one which struck him exceedingly. It was the sum of 300*l.* paid to Lord Dunglass as Chamberlain of Ettrick Forest. This sinecure dated from before the Union, and was originally 8*l.* 10*s.*, Scotch money. In a Committee of Inquiry on sinecures and pensions held in the year 1810, a Resolution was passed relative to this identical pension. Now, what he complained of was, that, after that Resolution, the sinecure should be renewed. He contended that the Sovereign, having a right to the Crown revenues only during his life time, had no power to make any grant out of them which should endure beyond the period of his life, because such a grant would interfere with the rights of his successors in the event of the grantee surviving him. This was the case with Lord Dunglass, who had survived George 4th. He (Mr. Hume) thought that they should put an end to proceedings of this kind, as a useless and improper expenditure of the public money. He concluded by moving, "That a humble Address be presented to his Majesty, praying that he would be graciously pleased to issue a Commission to the law-officers of the Crown to inquire into the validity of the right of Lord Dunglass to hold the office of Chamberlain of Ettrick Forest after the demise of George 4th, and if necessary, to bring the question of its validity to trial."

The *Lord Advocate* said, that his own opinion was, that this grant was illegal; but he thought that it would be indecorous in the House to adjudicate upon it, and to deprive the noble Lord of it in his absence, and without hearing what he might have to urge in support of it. He was, therefore, of opinion that the best plan which the House could follow would be the adoption of the Motion of the hon. member for Middlesex. It was certainly a curious thing to give Lord Dunglass 300*l.* a-year for the collection of quit rents which did not amount to more than 230*l.* a-year. It was unfortunate for the noble Lord that this appointment of 300*l.* a-year had not been a pension upon the Scotch pension-list; for in that case he might have continued to hold out, inasmuch as the pensions on that list, which expired with the Sovereign, had been continued by the liberality of Parliament.

Motion agreed to.

Inclosures.] Mr. *Pryme* said, that the object he had in view was to induce the House to pass a Resolution directing that in every Inclosure Bill hereafter passed, a clause shall be inserted to provide for the allotment of a certain portion of land, to such of the labouring poor as shall be willing to hire it at a moderate rent. He apprehended that would be one of the best modes of withdrawing the agricultural labourer from illegal or profligate pursuits, and of restoring to him, at least in some degree, those habits of steadiness and providence which were wont to be his chief characteristics. The plan had already been tried in several places, and particularly at Saffron Walden, with complete success; and by the Report of a Society, calling itself "The Labourers' Friend Society," it appeared that it had led not only to a considerable increase of the comforts of the poor, but also to a material diminution of the Poor-rates in every instance in which it had been carried into operation. What he proposed was, "that a portion of land be allotted out of the commonable lands, or waste grounds to the incumbent of the living, and the parish officers, for the time being, and the owners of 100 acres of land, in such parish, as trustees, to let the same in small portions at low rents, to all labourers resident in the parish, who may be desirous of hiring the same—such rents to be paid to the parish officers for the time being, in aid of the Poor-rates." And in contemplation of any objection that might be raised as to the impossibility of particular parishes being able to comply with such a regulation, he had added this proviso—"unless any special reason can be shown why such allotment cannot conveniently or properly be made in that particular instance." He trusted, therefore, that he had so worded the Motion, as effectually to shut out any objection that such a resolution or such a plan could not be adopted, because it could not be made applicable in every instance. One of the arguments which he had heard urged against the proposition was, that it would interfere to the prejudice of private property. He maintained that it would have no effect of the kind — on the contrary, by improving the condition of the poor—by rendering them more contented, more happy, and more orderly, and, at the same time, by diminishing the Poor-rates—it would confer a great benefit rather than effect any injury to private property. Of the few instances in which the experiment had been tried, he would mention two. In one parish the plan was adopted in 1819, at which time the Poor-rates amounted to 2,000*l.* a-year; but in 1830, after it had been in operation for ten years, the Poor-rates were reduced to 1,400*l.* a-year. In the other instance—that of Saffron Walden, in consequence of the adoption of this plan, the Poor-rates had been reduced from 3,000*l.* to 2,000*l.* a-year. Independent of this reduction in the Poor-rates, there was another point of view in which the plan seemed to have worked most advantageously. During the period of the disturbances in the agricultural districts, although the surrounding country was nightly alarmed by fires, and the day rendered dangerous by tumultuous bodies of machine-breakers, the parish of Saffron Walden was wholly undisturbed, and no destruction of property took place there. It appeared, too, that the rent of the small portions of land allotted to the labourer had always been punctually and cheerfully paid, without any demand for reduction, although all other rents of land had been lowered nearly thirty per cent. Further, it appeared that where the plan had been adopted, the idle and mischievous among the rural population—the thief and the poacher—had been converted into honest and industrious men. Having mentioned the general objects of his Motion, as well as some of the results of previous experiments, which should recommend it to the adoption of the House, he might, perhaps, be allowed to cite another instance, which was, perhaps, stronger than any to which he had yet alluded, and which seemed to afford conclusive evidence of the propriety of a general resolution of this kind being adopted. In an Inclosure Bill passed for a parish in the county of Huntingdon, in 1830, a clause was inserted for the allotment of about twenty acres of land, to be let out in the manner that he proposed, to the agricultural population of the place, which consisted of about 400 persons. The inhabitants of this parish had previously been rather idle and disorderly than otherwise; the Sunday was commonly spent in drunkenness and riot—pauperism prevailed to a very great extent, and little of providence or industry was to be found amongst them. The Bill had now been in operation for little more than twelve months; but, during that short period, the change effected in the disposition of the inhabitants had been most striking; they were become industrious, provident, steady, happy, and comfortable. Many burnings of agricultural stock, and much breaking of machinery, took place around them; but the inhabitants of this parish, though formerly of a disposition to join in such proceedings, not only abstained from doing so, but, in the only instance of a fire which took place within the parish, they turned out to a man, to save everything that it was possible to save. The hon. Member concluded by moving the following Resolution:—"That the Committee, on every Inclosure Bill, shall, in their Report, certify whether a portion of land, as near to the village as conveniently may be, and not less than in the proportion of one acre to every twenty-five inhabitants, according to the last population census, has been by such Bill directed to be allotted out of the commonable lands or waste grounds, to the incumbent of the living, and the parish officers for the time being, and the owners of 100 acres of land in such parish, as trustees, in trust to let the same in small portions, at low rents, to all labourers resident in the parish, who may be desirous of hiring the same, such rents to be paid to the parish officers for the time being, in aid of the Poor-rates, or whether there be any special reason why such allotment cannot conveniently or properly be made in that particular instance."

Mr. *Hume* did not rise to oppose the Motion, but he thought that on one of such importance the Resolution ought to be printed, and full time allowed for its consideration. He would therefore propose that the debate on this question be adjourned to that day week.

Debate adjourned.

POLICE-OFFICES (LONDON).] On the Motion of Mr. Lamb, the House went into a Committee on the Metropolitan Police-Offices Bill

Mr. *Pease* proposed a clause, to the effect to give Magistrates the power of punishing persons who kept places for bear-baiting, dog-fighting, and other cruel sports of that kind, which tended so much to demoralize those who assisted at them, and also to punish those who were present at such sports.

On the Question that the clause be brought up,

Mr. *Lamb* said, he felt it to be his duty to oppose the clause which the hon. member for Durham wished to introduce. He saw no reason why the sports of the poor should be interfered with more than those of the rich. If individuals had cause to complain of any riot or disturbance occurring in places where such sports were carried on, it was open to them to indict such places as a nuisance.

Mr. *Lennard* said, those practices might be described by some as amusements; for his own part, he viewed them as cruelties. He, therefore, should support the clause. It was true, that individuals might proceed by indictment; but the process was so dilatory and so uncertain, that it was almost useless to resort to it. He concurred in the propriety of the clause, and was glad that the hon. Member had brought it forward.

Mr. *Hill* opposed the clause. He did not see how it could be fairly agreed to, unless the House was prepared to put down coursing, pigeon-shooting, angling, &c. The House would not surely proceed on the puritanical principle and

> Compound for sins they are inclined to,
> By damning those they have no mind to.

Mr. *Rotch* contended the clause was very desirable with the view to prevent the practice of frequenting these pits for fighting dogs, and pursue other such inhuman sports, by disorderly and dishonest persons. They were too often the haunts of vagabonds and thieves. The clause, too, was to be confined to within five miles of the metropolis, and that with the view to prevent the congregating together of loose and idle persons, who often met in these places for no other purpose than to plan the robbery of individuals, burglary, and rifling of banks in this city.

The *Solicitor General* was convinced that the argument used by the last speaker, when calmly considered, would be deemed an objection strong enough to induce the House to reject the clause. If these consequences were to be anticipated from the continuance of the practice, why was not a Bill of a general nature brought in to repress these sports throughout the country? The interests of morality would seem to require a general measure instead of beginning to legislate for a district in the manner of an experiment.

Mr. *George F. Young* was of opinion, that the proposed clause ought to be agreed to, because it would have the effect of putting an end to practices which had a demoralizing influence on the people.

Mr. *John Romilly* objected to the clause. It was, as he thought, improperly introduced in a Police Regulation Bill. In a Bill for the prevention of cruelty to animals it might fairly be inserted.

Sir *Thomas Freemantle* thought the present opportunity afforded by the proposition of the hon. member for South Durham ought not to be suffered to pass unimproved. This experiment to repress these cruel and immoral associations he hoped would lead to a more general measure being adopted by the Legislature to accomplish so truly desirable an object.

Mr. *Pease,* in reply, observed that his sole object in bringing forward the clause was to aid the Magistracy of the metropolis in putting down these places, which it was admitted were the constant haunts of the idle and immoral, and in the continuance of which the police found the greatest obstacle to the coercion of the guilty, and the repression of plans for robbery and outrage.

The Committee divided—Ayes 42; Noes 46: Majority 4.

The House resumed.

HOUSE OF LORDS,
Thursday, May 9, 1833.

MINUTES.] Bill. Read a second time:—Tiles Duties' Repeal.

Petitions presented. By the Duke of CLEVELAND, from Wrington; and by the Earl of DELAWARR, from Framfield,—for the Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By the Duke of CLEVELAND, from South Shields, for a Better System of Registration of Births and Baptism, for Freedom from Parochial Rates to the Dissenters, and for Relief from their other Difficulties.—By the Duke of RICHMOND, and Lords SUFFIELD, and HOWARD DE WALDEN, from a great many Places,—for the Abolition of Slavery.—By the Duke of GORDON, from Aberdeen, for an Alteration in the Apothecaries Act.—By Lord WYNFORD, from three Places in Kent and Surrey, against the Local Courts Bill.—By the Earl of DELAWARR, from Agricultural Parishes in Cambridgeshire, for an Alteration in the Agricultural Labourers' Employment Bill.

COTTON DUTIES.] Lord *Auckland* moved the order of the day for their Lordships to resolve themselves into a Committee on the Cotton Duties Act. He would make no further observations than merely to express the satisfaction which Ministers felt at being able to reduce a tax which pressed heavily and injuriously on the cotton manufacture.

Lord *Ellenborough* took the opportunity to advert to the small surplus revenue which the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had calculated, he observed, on the revenue of one year only, instead of taking the average of several years, and the noble Lord ought to have remembered that the harvest last year was unusually abundant. He had no right to calculate upon such a surplus next year. It was, however, by the surplus revenue that former Ministers had preserved the credit of the country, kept up the price of the funds, and been enabled to reduce the interest of the debt somewhere about four millions since the peace. With respect to the duty on cotton, which it was now proposed to repeal, he reminded the Ministers that they had laid on that duty contrary to the voice of experience, though they now candidly described it as a most injurious tax. He had pointed out to them at the time, the impolicy of increasing the tax on India cotton, and they had abstained from doing it. He was happy to say, that the consequence had been, that the quantity of cotton imported from India had considerably increased since 1830, while the quality had been much improved. It now fetched 8*d.* per lb., and was equal to the average of the North American Cotton. He would suggest the propriety of removing all the duty on East India Cotton.

The Earl of *Ripon* said, that in point of fact, the surplus revenue had at any time contributed very little to the reduction of the National Debt. That had been effected by the reduction of the rate of interest, which was determined far less by the revenue derived from taxes than by the general state of the market. The way in which the reduction was now going on, was by the conversion of Perpetual into Terminable Annuities. With respect to the reduction of the duty on India cotton, he did not believe that would make any sensible reduction in the price of the article, or much promote its consumption. The noble Baron was perhaps not aware that the duties had been reduced on indigo, and various other productions of our Indian empire; and that other facilities had been given to the introduction of commodities from India, which he admitted was only due to the inhabitants of that part of the empire.

Lord *Ellenborough* wished also to advert, which he had forgotten before, to the increased Wine Duties of last year, as another evidence of the erroneous financial policy pursued by Ministers. Those increased duties, instead of yielding 250,000*l.* additional revenue, as the Ministers had calculated they would, had actually caused a loss to the revenue of 5,000*l.* By that increased duty the comfort of the people had been diminished, and the revenue of the country impaired.

The Marquess of *Lansdown* said, that a part of the disappointment arose from the discouragement which the consumption of the lighter wines had received, in consequence of the disease which had prevailed in the summer. The propriety of the system on which his Majesty's Ministers had acted, of relieving industry as much as possible, was exemplified by the great increase which had taken place in the manufacture of printed cottons; but they were only enabled to take the duty off them by the help of that small duty on the raw material which they had imposed, and which they were now happy to remove.

Bill went through a Committee.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, May 10, 1833.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a third time:—Personal Estates; Cotton Wool Duty Repeal.

Petitions presented. By the Earl of FITZWILLIAM, from the Dissenters of several Places, for Relief from their Grievances.—By the Earl of RODEN, from Dungarvon, for a Revision of the Criminal Law.—By the Bishop of LICHFIELD, from Stoke and Stowe, for a Repeal of the Sale of Beer Act.—By the Earl of ROSEBERY, from Perth, for an Amendment of the Bankrupt Laws; and from the Coopers of Leith, for a Repeal of the Assessed Taxes, and of the Stamp Duty on Receipts.—By the Duke of RICHMOND, the Earls FITZWILLIAM and RADNOR, the Bishops of LONDON and BRISTOL, Lords DINORBEN, DACRE, ROLLE, FEVERSHAM, BEXLEY, BARHAM, and SUFFIELD, from a very great Number of Places,—against Slavery.—By the Duke of NEWCASTLE, by the Marquess of DONEGAL, by Earl FITZWILLIAM, by the Bishops of LONDON and LICHFIELD, and by Lord KENYON, from several Places,—for the Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By the Marquess of BRISTOL, from Bury St. Edmund's, in favour of the Factories Bill.

STAFFORD INDEMNITY.] The Earl of *Radnor* moved that the Stafford Election Indemnity Bill be read a second time.

Lord *Lyndhurst* rose, not to oppose the Motion, but to make a few remarks to their Lordships. He thought it appeared from the Bill and the evidence, that bribery to a great extent had existed at Stafford, both on former occasions and at the late election. It appeared from the evidence, that not only the electors, but the candidates were deeply implicated in these transactions, and he considered it necessary that their Lordships should take some effectual measure to put a stop to similar proceedings. His object in rising, was only to make an observation in respect to what had come out in the Committee, that their Lordships might be prepared for the Bill. It appeared that the only proceedings now depending in the other House of Parliament, was a petition under the Grenville Act, and he knew no instance of a Bill of this kind being brought forward, while the only proceeding taken was such a petition. For this there was a good reason. The petition under the Grenville Act was a judicial proceeding; there were two parties to it, and each of which might call and examine any witnesses he liked. It was competent, therefore, for these parties to call persons as witnesses, whose evidence was of no importance, but who would, by being called, be indemnified for bribery done at the election. Such consequences would not follow from any other proceeding in that or the other House. In other cases, the whole was under the control of the House, and it could prescribe what witnesses should be called. He directed their Lordships' attention to this difference, that they might be aware of the consequences which would arise from passing the Bill in its present shape, and be induced to admit a clause to guard against them. He must make an observation or two arising out of the Bill. It was not, like the other Bills which had passed, having in view a similar object. All other Bills of the kind were only to indemnify the persons examined, but this Bill proposed something altogether different. It was impossible to read it and compare it with other Bills to the same purport, and not discover the difference. It was a Bill to indemnify all persons examined as witnesses, candidates, and all others who had violated the law and been guilty of bribery. The title of all other Bills was to indemnify persons examined under the Bill for proving the bribery of the said borough. The title of the present Bill was an Act to indemnify all persons guilty of bribery in the election of burgesses for the borough of Stafford. This was not an accident, for the first clause corresponded to the title. It was to the effect that "every person whatever, guilty of bribery at the election of Stafford, whether examined as witnesses or not, should be entirely and completely indemnified." Then followed another clause, which was altogether useless. After this first clause had indemnified all persons, the other indemnified those who might be examined as witnesses. That was intended to mislead. It reminded him of the old story of the Oxford scholar, told, he believed, by Mr. Windham in the House of Commons, who made a large hole for his cat, and a little one for his kitten. He had compared the Bill with the Indemnity Bills for East Retford, Penryn, Barnstaple, and found it different from all them. The departure from the customary form of such Bills was evidently designed, and he mentioned the circumstance to make their Lordships aware of it, and put them upon their guard against Bills coming from the other House, particularly if they professed to contemplate a laudable object.

Lord *Wynford* concurred in the remarks of his noble friend. If their Lordships were to pass the Bill in its present shape, it would be an encouragement to bribery. He hoped, therefore, to see it amended in the Committee. He would allow indemnification only to those who really were examined, and he would except the candidates at past elections and their agents. Some of his observations had been much misrepresented on this point; for there could not be a greater enemy to bribery than he was; but he wished to do away with it in the most effectual way, by punishing the principals who corrupted, and if any were to escape, let it be the unfortunate misled wretches who were seduced into the offence. If there were not some alterations made, the prime movers of guilt would escape.

The Earl of *Radnor* did not see, that he was answerable for the phraseology of the Bill, and, therefore, was not called upon to defend it. He did not, however, see that there was so much to find fault with, as the noble Lord appeared to make out. The enactments of it he thought precisely in conformity with the title of it. Undoubtedly there was some affinity in the present Bill to former Bills of the same nature. But there was an essential difference in this respect, for all the former Bills, except that for the indemnification of witnesses on Lord Melville's trial, had originated in that House. The present Bill, too, had been brought forward under very different circumstances from former Bills. As to what the noble Lord had said with reference to the second clause, was not exactly correct; the fact was, that while the first clause enacted a certain indemnification, the second clause limited that indemnity with reference to witnesses.

Bill read a second time, and ordered to be committed on Monday.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, May 10, 1833.

Minutes.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of Alderman Thompson, an Account of all the Ships detained in the Ports of the United Kingdom under the Order in Council of the 6th of November last, and of such as have been liberated under the Order in Council of the 3rd of December.—On the Motion of Mr. Hume, an Account of the Ordnance Stores now in the Dock-yards at Woolwich, and elsewhere, as also of the Storekeeper General's Stores in Tooley Street: also an Account of the Expense incurred by the Payment of his Majesty's Diplomatic Servants and Consuls abroad for the three years ending January 5th, 1833.—On the Motion of Mr. Pease, an Account of the Number of Tiles and Bricks upon which Duty was paid in Scotland and England between January the 5th, 1832, and the same day 1833.—On the Motion of Mr. Warburton, an Account of the Number of Convictions in the Metropolis, and all the Counties, and of Publicans and Beer-house Keepers Convicted of keeping their Houses open at Unlawful Hours, from the 1st of April, 1831, to the 1st of April, 1833.—On the Motion of Mr. Spring Rice, Accounts of the Receipts and Application of the Revenue of the Ports of Ireland, and of the Names and Number of Pilots and Vessels employed during the last three years: also an Account of the Annual value of the Property in each of the several Parishes within the Metropolitan Police District upon which the last Rate for the Relief of the Poor prior to the 5th April, 1833, was assessed.

Bills. Read a third time:—Payment of Debts; Assizes Removal. Read a second time:—Soap Duties.

Petitions presented. By Mr. G. Young, from Newcastle; and Mr. Ingham, from South Shields,—against the Embargo on Dutch Shipping.—By Mr. Cotes, from Market Drayton, for the Repeal of the Sale of Beer Act; and from Willington, for a Repeal of the Duty on Malt.—By Mr. Mark Philips, from the Manchester New Mechanics' Institution, for a Repeal of the Taxes on Knowledge.—By Lord Milton, Captain Bouverie, Sir Robert Bateson, and Messrs. Scholefield, Dawson, Whitbread, E. Buller, Poulter, and Ingham, from a great many Places,—against Slavery.—By Sir Robert Bateson and Mr. Dawson, from several Places,—for a Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By Mr. Mark Philips, from Manchester, for Relief for the Dissenters from their present Grievances.

Dutch Embargo.] Mr. Alderman *Thompson* rose to call the attention of the House to the Motion of which he had given notice, relative to the state of the relations of this country with the kingdom of Holland, and especially to the consideration of the very injurious orders of November and December last, which had inflicted not only the most serious injury on the shipping and commercial interests of this country, but had inflicted a deep stain on the honour and character of the nation. In other times it had been the policy of England to assist the smaller States of Europe against the oppression of the more powerful; and particularly, she had upheld Holland against France; but it must be confessed, that the recent policy of England, with regard to the King of Holland, was of a very opposite character. Not only had England been a party to a proceeding which deprived that monarch of a great portion of his dominion, but it had also seized all the Dutch shipping lying in our harbours, and had detained them for six months, while every day our men of war were capturing Dutch vessels on the high seas. It was asserted at first when this course was adopted, that it was a measure of coercion, for the purpose of compelling the Dutch to deliver up the citadel of Antwerp to the Belgians; but that citadel had now been in their possession four or five months, and the embargo was still continued. What account could be given of this, no one, except the Government and their dependents, and those connected with them, yet knew. He had made inquiry of persons deeply interested in the trade of this country with Holland, whether they knew anything of the matters in dispute between the two Governments; but he could never obtain any satisfactory answer. Some said that they related to the dispute about the navigation of the Scheldt, and that although one point in question was the amount of the toll which the Dutch government should be entitled to demand from vessels passing through its dominions, whether it should be one guilder or two guilders upon the tonnage; there was another point, namely that our Government opposed the demand of the king of Holland, which he thought a very reasonable one, that he should have a right to place a Custom-house officer in foreign vessels at Flushing, to continue with them till they should pass through his States. It was impossible, however, to say what the real cause was of the present unhappy state of our relations with Holland, because all information on the subject had been withheld by the Government; but whatever it might be, he now hoped that the right hon. Secretary for Foreign Affairs would be prepared to give the House some explanation. The Government had placed an embargo on all the trade between this country and Holland; yet no statement had been laid before the House of Commons on so important a subject, though a branch of trade was for the present annihilated, which it was necessary to maintain on a good footing. There was no appearance either that any progress had been made towards settling the point in dispute, whatever it was. If the king of Holland had chosen to meet the measure of our Government by a similar measure, by seizing on British vessels in Dutch ports, he believed there were double the number of these in his power to that of the Dutch vessels in the ports of the United Kingdom. Such would have been the consequences, if the king of Holland had taken that course; consequences which in his (Alderman Thompson's) humble judgment, were very likely to have ended in a war. But the king of Holland not only allowed British ships in his harbours to proceed to their respective places of destination, but when British ships had since been cast upon the Dutch coasts, every assistance had been afforded them, they had been repaired and sent away. In order to show the House the extent of the loss which the country had sustained, he would state the amount of the tonnage engaged in the trade between this country and Holland. He had now a petition containing facts on this subject, from South Shields. He had one also from Sunderland, and he understood that the hon. member for Newcastle had one from that important town. The number of ships which cleared out for ports in Holland from the port of Sunderland, in the year ending 5th January, 1832, was 321; tonnage, 54,861; during the same year the number of foreign ships was 78, and their tonnage 7,160. Not one of the 321 vessels, which had at that period been employed in that trade, could now be employed, and they must lie idle or enter into other branches of trade. He had himself recently seen 340 vessels in the port of Sunderland, lying totally unemployed, and with no prospect of being employed, because there was now no prospect of profitable employment, or even such employment as would afford a fair remuneration. The number of ships from British ports, which entered the port of Rotterdam in 1832, was 1,200. He had not been able to obtain the official returns of the shipping for the last year, because the official accounts had not yet been laid on the Table of the House; at least he had not been able to examine them. He would therefore next give a statement of the number and tonnage of the shipping of the United Kingdom, engaged in the trade with Holland, in the year ending the 5th January 1832, and of foreign ships in the same trade:—The number of British vessels then was, 1,617; tonnage, 179,488; number of foreign vessels, 784; tonnage 86,461. The British vessels were double the foreign. Every one of these was now idle. The amount of British manufactures, and of foreign and colonial produce, imported by British vessels into Holland, in the year ending on the 5th of January 1832, was 4,631,000*l.* That showed what an extensive and profitable trade had been suspended by the embargo. Looking also at the state of the relations of this country with Portugal, he was compelled to observe that the conduct of the Ministers in respect to that country, had injured an important branch of the trade of this country. Ministers ought deeply to have considered the matter before they had taken a step which must lead the shipping interest into increased difficulties. He found, taking the trade of Portugal along with that of Holland, on an average of three years, that 2,000 ships had been thrown out of employment, having 220,000 tons burthen; and that at a time when the shipping interest was, from other circumstances, in a state of the most trying difficulty. He knew that the trade of London during the last year had exhibited a great falling-off, and he did not believe that it had been transferred to other ports; at least, he knew it had not been transferred to Liverpool. The number of vessels which entered the Port of London last year, was less by 919, and the tonnage was less by 150,000 tons than in the preceding year. Having made this statement, the House would see what a vast injury had been inflicted on our own trade, rather than on that of Holland. For the ship-owners of Holland had taken measures which almost nullified, with respect to them, the object of our Government. A large proportion of the merchant vessels of Holland, which were adapted to various trades, had been nominally transferred to the subjects of neutral powers. The flag of Hanover, and other flags (the names of some of which had never been heard of before) were used for that purpose; and the owners of the ships received a profit of from twenty to thirty per cent on the freight. The hon. Alderman here read a letter from Rotterdam, dated 18th of April, and addressed to a great commercial house in London, showing the manner in which our Order in Council had been evaded. But the injury which our trade had suffered was not confined to Europe. When the news arrived in South America, and in the ports of the United States, that our Government had laid an embargo on Dutch vessels, British ships could no longer obtain investments from the South and North American merchants; they considering it manifest that the embargo was preliminary to war, and of course preferred to send their goods by neutral vessels. After some time the alarm abated; but even then neutral vessels obtained five-eighths of a penny freight, while English vessels could obtain only four-eighths of a penny freight; the difference of the insurance being the cause of the inequality. The effect on our trade in the East had also been considerable. There were Dutch men-of-war at Trincomalee; and great alarm was felt lest English ships should be detained at Batavia, as a matter of retaliation, when it was known there that Dutch ships had been detained in the ports of England. The value of the property under the Dutch flag seized in English ports, was estimated at 350,000*l.* or 400,000*l.*: the greater part of which belonged to English capitalists; and more than two-thirds of which had been insured in England. Some part of the property alleged to be Dutch, actually belonged to neutrals. Application had been made for its release, which, however, was not obtained until after great delay and expense. In one case, in which the cargo was worth only 3,000*l.*, the expenses of the application, of the dock charges, &c. had amounted to no less than 267*l.* 8*s.* 6*d.* The first Order in Council of the 6th of November, had been followed up by another, admitting the release of perishable articles. Great difficulties had, however, resulted from the difference of opinion which existed, whether certain articles were perishable or not. One vessel bound to Rotterdam from Smyrna, and laden principally with fruit, was captured and sent into Gibraltar, where she was ordered to be released on the ground of her having a perishable cargo. Of course she proceeded on her voyage in full confidence; but when she arrived in the English Channel, she was again seized; and although she had the certificate of her release at Gibraltar, the application for her release in this country was refused. Another vessel having a perishable cargo, was detained for six weeks, by which time the cargo had perished, but no indemnification was allowed. It must be evident to the House that all these matters must paralyze trade; and he confessed, that he could not conceive the existence at the present moment, of any question of difference between this country and Holland, which could justify the infliction of so much injury on our commerce. He said our commerce, for so far were the Dutch from having suffered, that not one commercial failure had been the consequence in Holland. He would no longer trespass on the patience of the House, but would proceed to make his Motion, hoping that the noble Lord would throw some light upon the subject. The hon. Alderman concluded by moving, for an account of all vessels detained under the Order in Council of the 5th of November last, laying an embargo on Dutch vessels in our Ports; as, also, for copies of all applications that had been made to the Privy Council for the release of such vessels, &c.

Mr. *George F. Young* seconded the Motion, and expressed his entire concurrence in the commercial view which the hon. and worthy Alderman took on the subject; although he must in candour add, that he did not agree with the hon. and worthy Alderman in his political opinions respecting it. He was quite satisfied that the political situation of his Majesty's Ministers, with reference to Holland, had been one of great difficulty; and that they had had no alternative but to compel the king of Holland to accede to the terms proposed to him. But, concurring in the political views of his Majesty's Ministers, he differed from them as to the expediency of the means which they adopted to carry them into effect, especially in laying an embargo, which was much more injurious to English than to Dutch commerce. He did not think, that laying on embargoes, and thereby injuring private individuals, was, under any circumstances, the way in which a dispute between great nations ought to be carried on. He could corroborate what had been stated by the hon. and worthy Alderman, that Dutch commerce had not been considerably impeded by the British Order in Council, for it had been carried on in neutral vessels; and in order to encourage its being still carried on in Dutch vessels, the government of Holland had remitted ten per cent of duty on neutral vessels, Dutch built, and conferred on them the privileges, in Dutch ports, of Dutch ships. In addition to what had been stated by the hon. and worthy Alderman, he had been informed, that an offer had been made by the Government of the Hague to allow eight English vessels to come to Haerlem for butter and cheese, provided eight Dutch vessels were allowed to go to Liverpool for salt, but that the offer had been refused by our Government.

Viscount *Palmerston* said, that as it was not his intention to object to the Motion of the hon. Alderman, he should not go so minutely into the details of the subject as he might otherwise be induced to do. He was quite willing to admit, that all restrictions on commerce were inconvenient. But if it were asserted as sound argument that, whatever political necessity might require, commerce ought not to be subjected to any inconvenience, that argument would be operative not only against embargo, but against war; and if, in deference to that argument, we were to sacrifice our political interests, the time would soon come when we should be called upon on the same ground to sacrifice our political independence. The question, therefore, was not whether the embargo on Dutch vessels had been inconvenient to our commerce (although even on that point the statements of the hon. and worthy Alderman were much exaggerated), but whether there had been a sufficient political motive to justify his Majesty's Government in having recourse to a measure which, though one of coercion to Holland, and inconvenience to the commerce of this country, was nevertheless less in severity than war, to which they might have been entitled to resort. Now the question, whether the state of matters between this country and Holland was such as to justify the proceeding adopted by his Majesty's Government, was so mixed up with the consideration of all the transactions between the two countries for the last two years, that to go into it would involve a much wider field of discussion than that into which the hon. and worthy Alderman probably intended to enter. But, if any hon. Member would give himself the trouble of perusing the documents which he (Lord Palmerston) had had the honour of laying on the Table, he would be satisfied that the state of the negotiation between this country and Holland at the time was such, that his Majesty's Government could not consistently with the honour, the engagements, and the interests of this country, avoid taking the step which it had taken. The refusal of the king of Holland to consent to reasonable terms, his rejection of the Treaty of which the House was cognizant, at the same time watching his opportunity to reconquer Belgium, not only justified his Majesty's Ministers, but rendered it their imperative duty to do what they had done, or something still more severe. Having two courses before them, he thought they had done right in preferring the milder. If they had chosen the more severe, all the commercial inconveniences described by the hon. and worthy Alderman would have been infinitely greater; and others, which his Majesty's Government were very anxious to avoid, would have been added to them. The hon. and worthy Alderman had talked of supporting the weak against the strong. It was on that principle that his Majesty's Government had proceeded. Holland was, unquestionably, stronger than Belgium. We had interfered to prevent war between

Holland and Belgium, and therefore, were not liable to the odium of aiding the strong against the weak. All argument to the contrary, was founded on the sophistry that the dispute was, not between Holland and Belgium, but between Holland and England. The hon. and worthy Alderman expressed himself at a loss to understand how the present state of the negotiation between the two countries justified the continuance of the embargo. The House would, of course, not expect him (Lord Palmerston) to explain the precise state of the negotiation at the present moment. That he should not be justified in doing. All which it was consistent with his duty to state was, that his Majesty's Government were anxious to relieve the commerce of this country and of Holland from the pressure of the measure at the earliest moment at which they could do so, consistently with the just objects which they had in view, and with the national honour. The hon. and worthy Alderman was mistaken in supposing that the pressure was confined to the trade of this country, and that it was not felt by the trade of Holland. He (Lord Palmerston) did not mean to say, that our shipping interests did not feel inconvenience from the disruption of intercourse which the embargo had occasioned; although it was well known, that when one channel of commercial enterprise became closed, another was immediately opened; and that, as the Baltic trade last year was narrowed by circumstances, it this year afforded additional employment for our vessels. Still he did not dispute that the embargo in question must necessarily have occasioned some inconvenience to our commerce. But the hon. and worthy Alderman had proved too much. He had stated the annual averages of British manufactures and colonial produce exported to Holland at 4,600,000*l.* But then he said the embargo did the Dutch no injury, for they had nullified its effects by coming to our ports and carrying on their trades in neutral vessels. If so, it was clear, that they also nullified its effects on British trade, for in the ships which came to this country covering the commerce of Holland, the manufactures and produce of this country must necessarily be exported. He acknowledged that the measure was inconvenient to English commerce; but he did not think that it was so inoperative on the other party as the hon. and worthy Alderman represented. Until the object in view, however, was accomplished, he could not give the hon. and worthy Alderman any hope that his Majesty's Government would be disposed to relax its orders on the subject. The hon. and worthy Alderman had adverted to the various interpretations which had been put upon the Orders in Council, and had stated, that in some instances, the release of vessels laden with perishable commodities had been unjustly refused. He (Lord Palmerston) could state cases of another kind in which applications had been made, on the plea that the vessels contained perishable commodities, when in fact they contained no such thing. Would the House believe, that application had been made for the release of a Dutch vessel, detained at Swansea, on the ground of her having a perishable cargo, the cargo of which turned out to be iron. The hon. and worthy Alderman said, that the greater part of the Dutch ships detained in our ports were insured by British insurers. He believed, that he should be borne out in the declaration, that the insurance by an Englishman of a foreign ship against war with this country, or detention or capture by this country, was illegal, and contrary to the Constitution. [*"Hear!"*] Hon. Members cheered that observation; but he did not hesitate to assert, that if his Majesty, acting on the suggestion of his responsible advisers, subject of course to the opinion of Parliament, thought it necessary for the honour of the country to have recourse to hostile operations against another State, it was illegal for any British subject to interpose and throw his shield over the subjects of that State. He did not feel it necessary to detain the House further. The constitutional question had been fully discussed on a former evening when the subject was brought before the House by the right hon. member for Tamworth, and he thought that he (Lord Palmerston) had then succeeded in establishing, that the imposition of the embargo was, under the circumstances of the case, conformable not only to the law of this country, but to the general law of nations. The form in which the question had come under the consideration of the House, would afford him an opportunity of offering further explanation, should any circumstances occur to render it desirable; at present it was unnecessary for him to say more.

Mr. *Lyall* said, that it was impossible the shipping which was thrown out of employment by the embargo could find employment in any other direction. With respect to the petition which had been drawn up in the city of London, it had been signed by the most wealthy, respectable, and intelligent merchants, without any reference to party feelings and that was decidedly against the embargo. With respect to insurances, the doctrine of the noble Lord would be correct if we were in a state of war; but he understood that we were not in that state. In spite of the sneers of the noble Lord, he could not help feeling a sort of compassionate sympathy for our ancient ally. It was impossible to allow mere considerations of commercial interest altogether to efface the recollection of our former political connection with that country — or make the nation forget how much we were indebted to the collateral ancestors of the present king of Holland. The determination of this Monarch appeared to increase with the difficulties of his situation, and it forcibly reminded him of that of his predecessor about 160 years ago, who, when he was pressed by the forces of Louis 14th, by land, and by this country by sea, his territories being at the time nearly inundated, replied to the English Ambassador, who told him that his country would be ruined, "I will avoid the disgrace of seeing my country ruined by perishing in the last dyke." He admitted, however, that the cases were not altogether parallel, though he had not heard one word to justify our perseverance in a course of policy, which was most disastrous to our own shipping interest.

The *Solicitor General* begged to say a few words as to the established doctrine in Westminster Hall relative to insurances. Under the circumstances stated in this discussion, there could not be the slightest doubt. If the policy was entered into before the embargo there was a clear implied exception of British capture or detention. This was decided very long ago in the case of "Long v. Hubbard," and had been recognised ever since. It was impossible for any contract to defeat the policy of the British Government. For a policy entered into before the embargo, no English underwriter could be made liable; and whatever before or after, no burthen could be imposed upon an English subject. In reply to what the hon. Member who spoke last had said respecting the sympathy which he felt for Holland, he must be allowed to observe, that when Holland attracted the sympathy of this country in former times her conduct was very different from that which she was at present pursuing. She was then at the head of freedom, exerting herself against tyranny; but now she had placed herself in alliance with governments which supported legitimacy. He spoke of legitimacy in the sense in which it was used by the Holy Alliance, which used it to cloak the desire to put down liberal institutions all over the world. The king of Holland was exerting himself to bring those whom he called his devoted subjects again under his dominion, and, under those circumstances he did not merit the sympathy of Englishmen.

Mr. *Baring* said, that the sentiments uttered by the hon. and learned Gentleman were quite novel, and had, he supposed, been specially reserved for the Reformed House of Commons. It was singularly incongruous to hear a law officer of the Crown denounce an attachment to legitimacy, and to hold it up as an excuse for persecution, for so he must designate the treatment which the king of Holland had experienced. By legitimate Governments he supposed the hon. and learned Gentleman meant Austria, Russia, and Prussia, and yet the hon. and learned Gentleman himself invoked those very legitimate Governments as parties to the decision by which this obstinate king of Holland refused to abide. If he might venture to offer advice to one who sold advice to all the world, he would recommend the hon. and learned Gentleman to confine himself in future to questions of law, and not to hazard such extraordinary opinions on policy and morality. Such doctrine would not have been uttered in that House fifteen years ago, when constitutional principles were quite as well understood as at the present moment, without being visited with severe reprehension. He wished to know what great political object was to be obtained by persecuting the poor king of Holland? What, he might be permitted to ask, were the duties of a Foreign Secretary? First, to be the guardian of the honour of the country, and next, without allowing himself to be entangled by protocols, to protect the commerce of the country. The noble Lord (Lord Palmerston) might smile at being thus lectured upon the discharge of the functions of his situation, but he (Mr. Baring) would nevertheless venture to repeat that the noble Lord's two leading duties were the guardianship of the honour and of the commerce of the country. If the noble Lord looked only to the direct injury our commerce had received, he would see but little of the disadvantage. To show that the pending negotiations were not so harmless, he would read extracts from letters from two of the great shipping ports of America, and, if necessary, he was ready to produce the originals. The first was from Mobille, and it was dated the 13th of February last. It stated, that English ships were there fast accumulating, but that they found increased difficulty in getting cargoes, as American vessels were able to carry cotton to Europe at a freight of 12½ per cent less than could be taken by English vessels: hence, it was clear, that nearly all the trade in cotton was carried on in American bottoms. A second letter from the same port, dated 21st February, mentioned that freights were still heavy at the depreciation before mentioned, and that people were unwilling to venture their property in British vessels. From New Orleans, under date of the 10th January, much the same statements were made, and at that date all the insurance companies had raised their premium upon property shipped in British vessels, which put shipments by them out of the question. These were actual commercial letters, proving beyond dispute that the unsettled state of affairs in Europe most materially affected the commercial interests of this country. It appeared further, that the difference on the rate of insurance upon American and upon British vessels was one per cent. One and a half per cent being charged for the former, and two and a half for the latter; and that, although the owners of British vessels had lowered their freights from sixteen to nineteen per cent, they could obtain no cargoes. No doubt other branches of commerce were as much injured as the cotton trade, The effect of the pending negotiations was felt in the Mediterranean, in the Brazils, and in every port of the Pacific Ocean; and it might be said, that the deterioration of the British flag extended to nearly all quarters of the globe. He put it to the House to reflect, whether these were not most serious considerations. At least, Ministers ought to know why they were thus proceeding, and the consequences of that proceeding, better than the noble Lord seemed to do; and he (Mr. Baring), for one, could not screw up his patriotism to the point reached by the noble Lord, when he expressed his satisfaction that the poor Dutchmen were suffering in an equal degree. Whatever the law of nations might be on the subject, the noble Lord must alter the law of conscience before he could expect people to join in his congratulations. If there were anything to rejoice at in the state of modern Europe and of modern feeling, it was, that the Dutch, essentially a commercial people, had made these great sacrifices to principle; and he, for one, could not withhold from them his sincere admiration. Such was the practical injury of which all engaged in commerce had a right to complain; and although the noble Lord had not stated them, there might be some great political views which humble merchants could not understand, and which prevented the arrangement of existing differences. If such weighty considerations did operate with Ministers, and ought to keep them silent, they were unknown to him (Mr. Baring), and for this reason he had ventured to address the House. The noble Lord had said, that if people would but read all his protocols, they would see how ably he had conducted this matter. He (Mr. Baring) could not assert that he had read every word, but he had skimmed them, and indeed read as long as he could keep his eyes open, but even the noble Lord's pen could not enliven so dull a subject. Having done so, he must unfeignedly admit, that he was at a loss to know what the noble Lord was driving at. He could understand, indeed, that Ministers had taken up the cause of their new *protegé*, the King of Belgium, and that they wished everything to submit to him—that he should dictate all treaties of peace, and frame them according to the extent and nature of his wishes; but if he were called upon to state what England and Holland were really differing about, he should find himself totally at a loss upon the subject. He wished, therefore, that the noble Lord had condescended upon some explanation of the kind. As far as he (Mr. Baring) could make out, the king of Holland complained that the five arbitrators were reduced to two—that the negotiations began under the mediation of Austria, Russia, Prussia, Great Britain, and France, but that the three first Powers had retired from the trust. "When," said the king of Holland, "you put yourselves again in the same position to undertake this mediation, I am ready to submit to it; but the three Powers most friendly to me, and who are attacked by the King of Great Britain's Solicitor-General for being friendly to me, have seceded." "Aye," replied the noble Lord, "but France and England are united; they are powerful and you are weak; they must command, and you must submit." Such was, in effect, the language of the noble Lord to Holland; and he knew that that State was only resisting the measures of coercion which France and England would dictate. If Holland approved of the mediation of France and England, she would of course not resist, but the king of Holland knew, that to yield to them, was to yield to the two Powers who had always taken the view of the subject most hostile to his interests. The points of difference between the Powers were, after all, very trifling; as related to duties, there was, he believed, but a difference of half a guilder, or some fraction of a guilder. For his own part, he was certainly friendly to an alliance with France; but he thought that England had permitted France to lead her too much out of her direct course; and it almost appeared as though France had adopted the policy of endeavouring to embroil England with friendly powers, in order to give additional weight to her own influence. The noble Lord had said, that advantage was attempted to be taken of the exemption in favour of vessels carrying perishable commodities. He remembered perfectly a circumstance of a vessel which was permitted to land its cargo of iron at Cardiff. Upon questions of international law, he had frequently had occasion to differ from the noble Lord, and now he must venture, but with great humility, to differ from the learned Solicitor General on a question of law. In general, to that learned Gentleman's opinions on legal matters he was disposed to pay great respect. Nevertheless, he could not help expressing surprise at the doctrines which the learned Gentleman had promulgated with regard to insurances. According to his statement, the insurances of vessels laid under embargo by this country could not be recovered in Courts of Law as against the subjects of this country; but if the learned Gentleman had gone to Lloyd's Coffee-house, he would find that, to a point of honour, every underwriter considered himself liable; and that for all practical commercial purposes he would be liable. Such a doctrine would tend utterly to destroy that honourable confidence on which commercial transactions were based, and add new difficulties to those by which the commerce of the country was already embarrassed.

The *Solicitor General* rose to explain. He wished to distinguish between that legitimacy which it was proper to uphold, and that legitimacy which, if scrupulously followed, would have replaced the descendants of James 2nd upon the Throne of England, and would call upon us now to regard the Duke of Modena as our Sovereign instead of William the 4th, to whom we had all sworn allegiance.

Lord *John Russell* must first observe, in reference to what had fallen from his hon. and learned friend, the Solicitor General, that he entirely concurred with him, that it would be a most misplaced comparison to liken the conduct of William 3rd of England, when Prince of Orange to that of the present king of Holland. The same principle that would induce persons to support the present King of Holland, would have induced them to support the title of James 2nd to the Throne of this realm, instead of that of William 3rd. The hon. member for Essex had taunted his Majesty's Ministers with the number of their protocols, and he had been rather severe upon the protracted negotiations, undoubtedly, that had taken place on the subject of Holland and Belgium. But whether the interference of this country in the affairs of Belgium were justifiable or not, at all events the present Government were not to blame for it, that interference having been commenced by their predecessors in office. When his noble friend (Lord Palmerston) took the seals, he did not demand the conference, but found that one had been already agreed to by his noble predecessor, and he went into it, because it was not possible for him to avoid it. The real question which the hon. Gentleman had left unnoticed, was not, how long they should continue the embargo, but how they should best obtain a safe and honourable peace; and no Gentleman had undertaken to show that a better course could have been pursued to effect that object. The hon. member for Essex had on this, as on other occasions, attempted to throw an air of ridicule over the policy of his noble friend; but the House would recollect the prophecy, which had been confidently promulgated in that House. It had been said, that his noble friend would not be able, by all his negotiations, to preserve the peace of Europe for twelve months, and that if he did, it would be a masterpiece of legislation. The House would also recollect, that an hon. Member recommended as the only means of staving off a terrible war, the dismembering Belgium between France, Prussia, and Holland. The prophet and the *doctrinaire* was no less a person than the hon. member for Essex himself. But his noble friend had preserved the peace of Europe for at least twice twelve months, and Flanders was not handed over to France. This, too, notwithstanding the repeated artful statements of the hon. Member and his party, which had no other effect than to encourage the king of Holland in practising every artifice of delay; so as, if not actually to re-annex the entire of Belgium to his sovereignty, to dismember it, and get a slice of it as his second best euthanasia. The hon. Member was not correct in insinuating, that only England and France were united in respect to the policy pursued towards the king of Holland; the other three powers were equally agreed as to the general principle of the treaty or award which the king of Holland was called upon to sign; the only points upon which they expressed a demur, as to compelling him to abide by the award, were mere minor points of detail, not affecting the general principle of the convention of separation. He had, moreover, reason to believe, that the three powers were becoming every day more sensible of the real purpose for which the king of Holland put forward these minor points of cavil—namely, for the purpose of delay and embarrassment, and that all would be united very shortly in compelling him to abide by their common award. It should be recollected, that though the Scheldt tolls were a matter of very little moment to Holland, the principle on which they were exacted was death to the national independence of Belgium. The spirit, therefore, in which the latter resisted their imposition was one of patriotism; that in which the former struggled for their continuance, one of petty commercial jealousy. The hon. member for Essex had displayed in his language great eagerness to cultivate friendship with France: at least such was the meaning of his words in one part of his speech, though it was to be regretted that, in another part of it, he had said something about feelings of jealousy, and looking on her increase of power with an evil eye. Such language reminded him of the words of the poet—

> Just hints a fault, and hesitates dislike.

He could only say that such a course of policy was the most likely to end in war. If to produce such a result were the hon. Member's intention, he would certainly fail, for the people of both France and England were now too much enlightened to be influenced by unworthy commercial jealousies and national antipathies, which only led to bloody wars and oppressive burthens, that marred and checked their mutual glory and prosperity. To one acquainted with history, it was needless to point out the advantages of erecting Belgium into an independent kingdom. From the time of Louis 14th, to the peace of 1815, Flanders was the greedy object of French rapacity. Witness the wars of William 3rd, and those of Marlborough, and, still later, those of the French Revolution. Any settlement, therefore, which would effectually place that country beyond the reach of contention—a country which, in the words of William 3rd, was too small to keep up an army of attack, and yet too large to be easily conquered by a foreign state, would be cheaply purchased by 100 protocols, and six months' embargo.

Sir *Robert Peel* could not but admire the skill with which the noble Lord who had just addressed the House had avoided all allusion to the main question before it—namely, whether the embargo were illegal in principle and efficient in practice. The noble Lord's statements might be all correct, and those of his hon. friend Mr. Baring, all wrong; but the argument whether the embargo was an efficient instrument or otherwise, and whether its being discharged against Holland did not recoil upon and seriously injure those who devised and employed it, was wholly untouched by it. He must say, however, that he had heard the concluding part of the noble Lord's speech with pleasure—namely, that part of it in which he expressed a hope that peace would be preserved by six months embargo. If that were to be the case, then peace must be nearly established, for, if he were not mistaken, the embargo was laid on on the 7th of November, and that was the 10th of May. He was glad to hear the hopes expressed by the noble Lord, but that pleasure was in some degree abated by the statement of the Solicitor General, that Holland had rejected the sound advice of England and France, and fled for refuge and support to Courts the supporters of legitimacy. Such certainly was the expression of the hon. and learned Member. The learned Gentleman, it was true, had afterwards explained what he meant by legitimacy, as if he had been called upon as a writer of a Dictionary. He knew not why the hon. Gentleman had done this. If the learned Gentleman's explanation meant any thing it was, that all popular Governments must necessarily be opposed to the principle of legitimacy. The hon. and learned Gentleman meant, that the three great monarchies of Europe were ranged against England, France, and Belgium. It was not necessary, however, to mix up this question with the question of foreign policy. He would admit, that the object of the noble Viscount (Lord Palmerston) was justifiable, and he would further admit, that it was important to the peace of Europe to bring about this settlement; but if he admitted all this, he would still maintain that Ministers were not justified in coercing and injuring the trade of British subjects, by imposing an embargo for that object. He would maintain, first, that the embargo was, independently of all questions of foreign policy, an illegal and unconstitutional exercise of power and authority of the Crown, whilst, secondly, it was ineffectual for its purpose. The validity of the arguments of the noble Lord depended entirely on the fact, whether we were or were not at war with Holland. If we were not in a state of hostility with Holland, the noble Lord's argument went for nothing; except as an act of hostility to that Power, the embargo was wholly indefensible. But waiving that consideration, he was disposed rather to look upon it as an improper exercise of the prerogative of the Crown. Was the Crown to be authorized to continue indefinitely this restraint upon the commerce of our own people? To establish that as a precedent would be most dangerous and pernicious. If a vessel with iron on board represented her cargo as perishable, what did that prove but that commerce was placed out of the pale of the law, and was obliged to resort to such practices. In addition to its other evils, it became a temptation to fraud. The law was suspended, and commerce was placed under the discretion of the law-officers of the Crown. Surely a power to suspend or enforce all the restrictions implied in the embargo was one very liable to be abused. It was true, that he had heard no complaint of abuse, but it was a power which it was almost impossible to exercise impartially. He for one objected to commerce being taken from under the protection of the law to be placed at the mercy of the Ministers and law officers of the Crown—to commerce being ever put under such control. He was glad to hear that no objection was to be made from the Treasury Benches to furnish the whole of the information required, in order that Parliament might see that this power had not been improperly exercised. It was said, that some property on board of Dutch vessels was released because it was British property, but if British subjects might embark their property on board of Dutch vessels, why might not British subjects insure that property? He could not, indeed, conceive a stronger argument against the embargo than the important statement of the learned Solicitor General—namely, that it vitiated all contracts of insurance; and, that the under-writers at Lloyd's were not responsible for loss in consequence of the embargo. Could any argument, he repeated, be adduced more demonstrative of the injustice and impolicy of that embargo? But, then, said the noble Foreign Secretary, the same principle which would justify us in compelling Holland to accept our award by force,—by open war—would, *a fortiori*, justify us in attaining our objects by measures of mitigated hostility. He denied the position; the law of nations knew of no vacillating, neuter state, neither one thing nor the other; it treated of, and recognized only, the state of peace and war. A declaration of war was founded in practice; it gave parties warning; but in this sort of half-war nobody knew how to act. Was it possible to maintain that, because a third power refused to submit to English domination, that the Government of England, therefore, might place British commerce under the situation in which it had been placed for the last six months? Could this doctrine be applied to America on the ground, for instance, that she had refused the terms proposed to her relative to the north-east boundary? He positively denied the right of imposing an embargo, unless in a state of declared war; and, as Holland had not even attempted any injury against British interests, he denied the right to use such coercive means for carrying into effect any plan of negotiation. He repeated, that the embargo was a most unconstitutional act. In other cases of the exercise of the prerogative of the Crown, the parties might appeal to law; but that case admitted of no such appeal, and the law could afford the injured party no redress. That was a strong argument against it. But the main question was, whether the injury fell on the subjects of Holland or of England. He could not agree that it fell upon the former; and it had been shown that, since the embargo had been imposed, not a single mercantile or commercial failure had taken place, whilst the pressure had been great and severely felt in this country. He did not raise a question concerning the general policy of our interference in the affairs of the Netherlands, he confined himself to the injustice, inefficiency, and unconstitutional character of the embargo. Indeed, neither the hon. Member who opened the Debate, nor those who followed him, arraigned the noble Lord's foreign policy, while condemning the embargo as seriously detrimental to British commerce, and that, too, while it had not the effect upon the Dutch which only could justify its adoption. It did not seem to be at all a question of party politics, for the hon. member for Sunderland (Mr. Alderman Thompson) had voted the other evening for the Ballot, and other Members who supported his views as commercial men were in politics favourable to the Ministers. It would be idle, therefore, on this occasion to raise a cry of factious motives; no such motives operated on any Gentleman who was interested in that discussion. There was one very important question connected with this embargo to which he should like to hear a satisfactory answer—namely, whether we were bound to continue it to an indefinite period in virtue of a convention with the French Government. It would indeed pain him to find that an embargo so unconstitutional in principle, and mischievous in practice, and so inefficient for the purpose for which it was designed, should be continued in consequence of a convention with France. He trusted, however, that such was not the case, that the noble Lord had not been guilty of so great an absurdity —to use the mildest phrase—as to enter into such a dishonourable convention. At the time that this mischievously inoperative embargo was imposed, he had declared, that it would defeat instead of forward the object contemplated by it. He maintained the same opinion still, and hoped therefore, it would terminate within its original period. He had then stated, and would repeat, that an embargo was an instrument of war, which could not, from its very nature, be employed in a peace-preserving negotiation. The noble Paymaster of the Forces had been rather critical upon the observations in reference to France of the hon. member for Essex, speaking of them as characteristic of a man who

Just hints a fault and hesitates dislike.

without boldly expressing any other species of censure. He would answer the noble Lord by quoting, in reference to the policy of the noble Lord's colleague against Holland, that other line of the couplet:—

Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike.

Yes, their whole coercive policy was an illustration of these words of the poet. Their embargo was a *telum imbelle, sine ictu*, which had no other effect than rousing a spirit of indomitable resistance on the part of the Dutch, and enlisting on their side the best sympathies of the commercial population of England. And thus—and it ever should be—

———— "Even-handed Justice
Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice
To our own lips."

Ministers were creating a feeling in Holland which would propagate resistance to British views; whilst in this country they were creating a sympathy in favour of Holland. They were erasing in Holland all the feelings of ancient connexions; and he called on those who thought that Holland was in the wrong, to say whether the embargo was calculated or not to attain the objects for which it had been imposed. He called upon the House to abstain from the use of an instrument which was hurtful only to the hand which used it.

Mr. *Hodgson* complained of the peculiar grievance which the continuance of the embargo inflicted upon his constituents. Before the commencement of the embargo, the quantity of coals exported to Holland from Newcastle-upon-Tyne amounted to between 160,000 and 170,000 tons, and no less than 500 ships were employed in the carriage; but the whole of this trade had been stopped by the embargo. He had letters in his possession, from Dutch merchants to their correspondents in England, stating, that since the embargo was laid on, they had been obliged to resort to Russia for coals. It was to be feared, therefore, that if the restrictions on the trade with Holland were persisted in much longer, this country would be totally deprived of the Dutch trade.

Dr. *Lushington* said, that no one could, with correctness, ascertain what was the effect produced by the embargo on the trade of Holland. No one could deny, that the effect of it was not the same in Holland as in this country. He wished that reasons had been assigned why it should be different. If the trade of this country was plunged into difficulties by the embargo, the trade of the other country must be necessarily plunged into similar difficulties, from which it would not be easy to extricate it. He really did not well conceive the strength of the argument of the right hon. Baronet who had so lately addressed the House, when he spoke of a mitigated hostility, though in answer to it he would ask one plain and reasonable question. If the Crown had, and the right hon. Baronet must allow that it had, the right of making war, could it be maintained that the Crown had not the right of inflicting anything that fell short of war? Was there ever such an anomaly as to say that it possessed the one power, and did not possess the other? What, when it was allowed that the Crown might use its power to allay the disturbances of foreign states, could any man come forward, and say that the Constitution forbad the employment of a more mitigated form of that power, and that it must have recourse to its power in the severest shape—that it must, to secure peace, go to war; thus inflicting on the country it governs, one of the greatest scourges, and in the present instance, if resorted to, endangering the tranquillity of the whole of Europe. No man could support such an untenable argument. With respect to what had been said about policies of insurance, he held that no insurance could be made contrary to the regular law of the land on that subject, and that nothing could be more anti-commercial than to allow the principle of insuring against the very acts of the Government of the country. It appeared from some observations he had heard that evening, that it was expected that insurers were to be relieved from the payment of their insurances by the acts of their own country. But how were they to be relieved? At the expense, of course, of the community. On a former occasion he had said so much upon that subject, that he thought it useless to repeat his arguments. With respect to the allusions made by the hon. member for Essex, to part of the speech of his hon. and learned friend, the Solicitor General, he would say, that the hon. member for Essex had not understood the meaning of his hon. and learned friend's words. Really, the change of sentiment of the hon. member for Essex was wonderful. He had known that hon. Member to entertain successively, almost every opinion promulgated in that House, and after all settle in a doubt. The hon. Member sometimes first borrowed the moiety of one man's opinion, and then the moiety of another man's opinion, and when at last it happened that he came fixed with something like an absolute opinion, that opinion was not only inconceivable to the hon. Member himself, but it was inexplicable to every body else. Now if he (Dr. Lushington) understood right by the meaning of the observations of his hon. and learned friend, they meant that the king of Holland, instead of adhering to the old and liberal practices of his ancestors, had taken shelter under the wings of the Holy Alliance, a power, which, he thanked God, was now every day becoming less powerful—instead of doing an act of justice to a nation once annexed to his dominion, but differing in language, manners, and in feeling from his own, he was forgetful of the desires and wishes of that nation, and in preference consulted the caprice of crowned heads. That was what his hon. and learned friend meant; for he knew that if the king of Holland adhered to the hateful doctrines of the Holy Alliance, the scenes formerly caused by similar doctrines would be probably acted over again, and Holland be either reduced to slavery or become the prey of civil confusion. It would seem as if his Dutch Majesty wished for the renewal of such scenes, when he obstinately declined coming to any arrangement that would be for the benefit of Belgium, and would materially tend to the pacification of the whole world. He had but one word more to say on the question before the House. If there were any man who allowed more readily than another that the country was placed in a difficult situation with respect to this matter, he was the man. But what had he to do? He confessed his inability to look forward and provide a remedy for every possible evil. All he could do was, to look back, and, in doing so, he must remember the revolutions of France, and then that of Belgium, and see the difficulties which a former Government met with relative to Holland. Every one knew what such difficulties led to, and to what they might lead again. When he considered those difficulties, and compared them with the evils of the embargo, he was most thankful that, through the laying on of that embargo, out of accumulated difficulties, peace, and not war, had proceeded. He thought that at the present moment some value ought to be set on the continuance of peace for the last two years, during a period that it was of the most vital importance that it should continue. The consequence had been, that the resources of the country had been economized; and, above all, the shedding of blood had been spared. He thanked God for the continuance of peace, and for the prospects of escaping from the evils of war. If there were still difficulties to encounter, he was very far from going the length of the hon. member for Essex, and supposing that his Majesty's Government would be the victims of this system of diplomacy. He had no such supposition—he entertained no such fear. Far from it. He was full of thankfulness for the past, and full of hope for the future.

Lord *George Bentinck* wished to point out an instance of the way in which this embargo operated. There were two ships in the river, one an English, another an American vessel, freighted for Holland. When the Order in Council imposing the embargo was issued, the freight of the English ship was transferred to the American. The American sailed to Rotterdam, gained by her voyage *360l.*, and returned to the Thames with a second freight, whilst the English vessel had been the whole time lying idle where she was when the freight was first taken from her. Such an instance showed one of the evil effects of the embargo. The hon. and learned member for the Tower Hamlets seemed to be at a loss to know how the embargo injured the trade of this country without inflicting a similar injury on the trade of Holland. It ill became him to pretend to explain to the hon. and learned Member how the injury to this country was caused, but he would tell him how British trade suffered more and Dutch less. The reason was simple. Three-fourths of the trade between this country and Holland was carried on in English bottoms, and the other fourth in Dutch bottoms; consequently Holland could not suffer in the same proportion. The effect of the embargo was, to injure British trade three-fold. The fact was undeniable, and so was the inference he drew from it.

Mr. *Pollock* rose to complain that the hon. and learned Civilian had taken the opportunity which the present discussion afforded to allude to a discussion which had happened on a former occasion, and to make general remarks on the hon. Member below him (Mr. Baring). He (Mr. Pollock) thought his hon. and learned friend would have done better not to have made such personal remarks at a time when the hon. member for Essex had spoken, and when he therefore could have no opportunity of vindicating himself. With regard to the embargo, which was the main question before them, he would ask, had embargoes not always been used, not as instruments of peace, but as instruments of war? Was it then to be borne, that the embargo in this case should be used solely as an instrument by which to facilitate the negotiations carried on by our ambassadors, and the ambassadors of the king of the French, in regard to the separation of Belgium from Holland, in which France was chiefly interested, and the most certain to gain. He admitted, that it could not be said, that the King had not the power of laying on an embargo, even in time of peace; still, when he found that the contrary had uniformly been the practice by the law of nations—and when it was plain that the laying on of an embargo in time of peace was a grievance for which no redress could be obtained in our Courts of Law—he had no hesitation in saying that it was without precedent, and wrong; and he protested against it in the present instance, as tending to place England in a situation which might lead her into an inglorious war, from which neither honour nor advantage was to be obtained.

Sir *Robert Inglis* wished to know whether the noble Lord opposite (Lord Palmerston) intended to say, that the king of the Netherlands was obstinately protracting the pending negotiations with a view to the recovery of his dominion over the Belgian provinces? If the noble Lord intended to make any such statement, he must express his entire dissent with regard to it. He contended that the king of the Netherlands had, from the very beginning of the negotiations, as well as in his speech to the States-General, recognized the separation of the two countries. In fact, there had never existed on the part of that monarch a desire to withhold a recognition of the independence of Belgium. He would not enter into the commercial part of the question; all he wished to know from the noble Lord, or some other member of the Government, was, whether it was intended to charge the king of the Netherlands with protracting the pending negotiations from a desire to regain the possession of the Belgian provinces?

Lord *Althorp* said, that, being called upon by the hon. Baronet, he would answer his question, although he had no previous intention of taking part in the debate. It was true that the king of the Netherlands had agreed to acknowledge the sovereignty of Belgium; but he had done so on such conditions only as rendered it impossible that the independence of Belgium could be maintained. Such an acknowledgement was not likely to effect what they had had always in view in the course of those negotiations, namely, the maintenance of peace.

When hon. Members looked into the condition of those two countries, and considered the impossibility of maintaining the peace of Europe without a proper acknowledgement of Belgium, he thought they would agree with him that no more effectual step could be taken to prevent war. He admitted, and indeed, no man could doubt, that the embargo was very distressing to the merchants and injurious to the commerce of this country; but so was any measure in which it was necessary to use force to obtain a national object. The hon. Gentleman had spoken of the effect of the embargo on the commerce of the country; but the question now was, whether it were desirable that the House should interfere to put an end to this embargo, without taking into consideration the policy which led to its imposition, or if it were better to continue the same policy in order to maintain the peace of Europe. The right hon. Baronet seemed to think that this question had nothing to do with the general peace of Europe; but he would ask the right hon. Baronet whether it were probable, if war did exist between Holland and Belgium, that the general peace of Europe could be maintained? He and the Government of which he was a Member thought that it could not, and their object in laying on the embargo was to prevent such an occurrence. If, then, in the course of the negotiation between those countries it became necessary to use coercive measures against Holland, the question came to be, whether they were to retract, or whether they ought not to persist in the course which they had hitherto followed. It was even a question now whether they had not proceeded so far that it would be inconsistent with the honour of this country to retract. These were his views on the subject; but at the same time that he considered it the policy of this country to continue the embargo, he was certainly of opinion that it was the duty of Government to expedite the negotiations; and he could assure the House that such was the most anxious wish of every Member of the Government. He did not mean to enter further into the details of the question; but, as he had been called on by the hon. Baronet, he had thought it necessary to make those observations.

Mr. *Robinson* said, the assertion made by the noble Lord, that those Motions were got up for the purpose of forwarding the views of the king of the Netherlands, was most unfounded.

Viscount *Palmerston* explained. He had merely said, that he knew that those Motions were looked forward to in Holland as likely to relieve the trade of that country from the embargo which he believed pressed more heavily on Holland than on England.

Mr. *Robinson* thought the distinction drawn by the noble Lord was very nice. He thought that the House had a right to call on the Government to explain in what state the negotiation was, or how long it was likely to last. He could not help saying, that he saw no prospect of its speedy termination. Of the Five Powers which had originally taken part in the settlement of the affairs of Holland and Belgium, three, he believed, had seceded, and the whole affair appeared to be left to the arbitration of France and England; and he was of opinion that if the three Northern Powers had been really sincere in their wish to settle the question, Holland would not have been forced to submit. The noble Lord opposite had mooted a most extraordinary doctrine. He had said, that if commerce were shut out in one quarter it would find vent in another. In the course of his parliamentary experience, he (Mr. Robinson) had never heard such a doctrine from the mouth of a Member of the Government before; but he was afraid that it was the doctrine on which the present Government had frequently acted. With regard to the insurance on vessels on which the embargo had been laid, he could say that at least one-third of the subjects of Holland who had suffered were insured at Lloyd's, and that the loss, in case of confiscation, must eventually come on this country; and whatever the opinion of the learned Civilian opposite might be, he could assure him, that this was the opinion of the underwriters themselves, and of the merchants, as they drew a distinction between an embargo laid on during a war and this embargo, which had been laid on in a period of profound peace. He was convinced that the merchants did not petition the House in order to embarrass Government; indeed, he had never known so much forbearance shown to any Government; and he therefore repudiated the idea that they wished to embarrass the noble Lord and the king of the French. He admitted that it would, perhaps, be embarrassing to the Government, if the embargo were taken off at the present stage of the negotiation; but he thought it would have been much better if it had never been laid on. He thought the conduct of the king of Holland stood in a most honourable and honest light.

Motion agreed to.

Affairs of the East.] Mr. *Hume* rose to ask a question of Lord Palmerston relative to the affairs of the East, which were, in his opinion, quite as important, if not more important, than the affairs of the West, which they had just been discussing. He conceived that it was doubtful whether the policy which Great Britain had pursued with regard to Turkey had not been detrimental to her real interests. There was in it an apparent want of judgment, and a real mismanagement, for which it was difficult, if not impossible, to account. If there was anything more than another against which the House should be anxious to guard, it was against the occurrence of war in Europe and against the giving to Russia that preponderance in the East which she had now obtained by the mismanagement of the British Government. He called the attention of the House to this subject, because year after year, on his objecting to the large establishments which we had been keeping up in the Mediterranean, he had been told, that it was owing to the necessity under which we laboured of maintaining a large force in that quarter to guard our interests. The question on which he now sought to obtain public information was this—why at the hour of need, when a British force might have been of use, had the capital of Turkey been left a prey to the Russians? Why had there been even no ambassador of England there? And why had there been no fleet in the Dardanelles, to give efficacy to the remonstrances which he might have had occasion to make? Whilst we were publicly avowing that we concurred with France in her desire to maintain peace, it was strange that we should leave the Ministers of France to resist by themselves the importunities of the Russian embassy to obtain for their master military possession of Constantinople. That was an effect for which the noble Lord must be answerable, if, from his want of attention, it should turn out that that support which was necessary to give effect to the remonstrances of the French embassy at Constantinople had not been afforded in an emergency which, if it had occurred a few years ago, must have involved Europe in war. The emergency to which he alluded was the appearance of a Russian fleet, and also of a Russian army, at Constantinople. The question which he wished to put to the noble Lord was, had we any ambassador at Constantinople at present, or had we not? He held at that moment a report in his hand, which showed that for the fourteen years immediately preceding the year 1830 the diplomacy of the country had cost us annually from 300,000*l.* to 400,000*l.* a-year. He had been told over and over again, that this was necessary to guard our interests abroad; but now, when Constantinople was in danger of falling into the hands of the victorious Egyptians, there was no British diplomatist resident in Constantinople, to support or assist the remonstrances of the French embassy. He would again repeat his question—"Who is the ambassador from the Court of England to the Porte? And if there is any such person, why is he not at his post?" His object was to get an answer to that question; and in order to do so, he should move that there be laid upon the Table of the House the names of all persons appointed as ambassadors, or as Ministers plenipotentiaries, or as secretaries of embassy, to Constantinople since January, 1827, stating the dates of their appointments, and the amount of their salaries; stating, also, how long each of them had resided in Turkey since his appointment to his office. He should not press this Motion to a division; all he wanted was, to give the noble Lord an opportunity of making a satisfactory explanation upon these points to the House and to the country.

Viscount *Palmerston* said, that he had no objection to grant the return for which the hon. member for Middlesex had moved. He would tell the hon. Member, however, without waiting for the paper, that Sir Robert Gordon, who was ambassador to the Porte at the period first mentioned by the hon. Member, had returned home early in last year; that Sir Stratford Canning, who was to have succeeded him, had been sent on an important mission, which it was for the interest of Great Britain to have arranged as speedily as possible; and that Lord Ponsonby, who had succeeded him, had been sent out to Constantinople, was now there, and would have been there sooner had it not been for some difficulty which had arisen as to the means of transport. There had been however, during all that period at Constantinople a secretary of embassy, who had acted with great judgment and discretion, and whose conduct had met the entire approbation of the Government at home. He could not help saying, that he stood at that moment in a position unusual for a member of any Cabinet; for, after having been exposed to the lash of the hon. member for Essex, for his perpetual intermeddling with the affairs of other states, after having been visited with his castigation for mediating in one place, and for arbitrating in another, he was now exposed to the shafts of the hon. member for Middlesex, who thought that he had not interfered sufficiently in the affairs of Turkey. There was, it was true, some slight difference in the two charges brought against him. His Majesty's Government was blamed, in one of them, for interfering in matters at their own doors, which involved in them the safety of the Empire, and was blamed in the other for not interfering in matters which occurred at the other extremity of Europe, which however important they might be, were not quite so important to us as the affairs of Holland. But the hon. member for Middlesex was not justified in condemning his Majesty's Government, for not having interfered in the affairs of Turkey. The hon. Member had asked, where was our ambassador, and where was our fleet? He would answer the question. Our ambassador was on the road. Well; but the secretary of legation was at his post. When the hon. Member asked where was our fleet, he was inclined to ask where would it have been if the hon. Member's motion for cutting off 7,000 men from the number of men voted in the Navy Estimates had been carried? So reduced, how our fleet could have executed any plans either of arbitration or of mediation, he was at a loss to comprehend. He assured the House that the Government had not been inattentive to the events which had occurred in the east of Europe. Those events had received the most anxious attention of the Cabinet, and this country, it would appear hereafter, had not neglected to take steps in conjunction with its allies, to ward against the danger which those events menaced. Whenever the Government should be at liberty to enter into the necessary explanation of the steps which it had taken, in concert with its allies, he was certain that the House would be of opinion that it had not been unmindful of the duty which it owed to the country, and of the character which that country enjoyed among the nations at large.

Mr. *Baring* said, that though there was an apparent inconsistency in the assertion, it might still be true, that his Majesty's Government had interfered too much in one place and too little in another. There was no reason, on the face of circumstances, to suppose, that the noble Lord had neglected his duty as to Turkey; but when such important events as every man had anticipated for some time were on the eve of taking place,—when Russia was sending her fleet and her armies to Constantinople,—and when the French were dictating to the Sultan what he ought to do, it was not, even upon the showing of the noble Lord himself, satisfactory to be informed that one of our ambassadors was on the road to Constantinople, and that another was on the road from it. The progress and the probable result of the Egyptian invasion had been known and anticipated for months; and as yet there had been no satisfactory explanation offered why we had no minister to represent us at Constantinople.

Viscount *Palmerston:* Lord Ponsonby was kept at Naples for a month, because the frigate which was to convey him from Naples to Constantinople was wind-bound for that time, and not able to reach the bay of Naples.

SUPPLY—JERSEY.] The House went, on the motion of Lord Althorp, into a Committee of Supply.

Mr. *Ellice* proposed, that there be granted to his Majesty a sum of not less than 110,835*l.* 15*s.* 5*d.* to defray the pay of general staff officers and officers of the hospitals in Great Britain and Ireland, from the 1st of April, 1833, to the 31st of March, 1834, both days inclusive.

Mr. *Hume* said, that as this vote related to the staff, he would avail himself of the opportunity to put a question with respect to the staff in the Island of Jersey. The governor of that island was a general staff-officer. A dispute, which was likely to lead to some unpleasant disturbance, had lately taken place between that officer and the Parliament of Jersey, in consequence of his interference with its proceedings. It appeared that the local Parliament of that island, as well as the general Parliament of the Empire, had lately undergone a salutary reform. The Members had, in consequence, determined to admit the public in future to witness and to report their proceedings. To this determination the Governor had, as he was informed, opposed himself, and hence great dissatisfaction in the island. Now we ought to have the island at peace; for we had been at large expense for its protection, and all that expense would be thrown away if we had not the inhabitants cordially engaged on our side. He wished to know, whether it was true that a dispute had taken place between the Governor of the island and the local Parliament, and if a dispute had taken place, whether it was likely to be soon stopped? If not, it was likely to lead to further disturbances, and those disturbances would lead, as a matter of necessity, to increased establishments in that island.

Mr. *Lamb* had not expected such a question as this to be put to him upon the Army Estimates, with which it was not very naturally connected, and he was not prepared to give it a positive answer. The decision of which the hon. member for Middlesex complained, was not the decision of the Governor of Jersey, but the decision of the Privy Council, to which the matter had been referred. The Governor had only been the medium of communicating it to the local authorities. That decision, he understood, was strictly according to the law of the island.

Mr. *Hume* was sorry to find, that reform here had prevented reform from being established triumphantly in the Island of Jersey. The disturbances between the local and the imperial government would lead to the increase of our military establishments in Jersey, as similar events had led to the increase of them in other colonial dependencies of the Crown. He hoped that, on another occasion, the right hon. Secretary would lay before the House the reasons why the Government would not accede to the very salutary Amendment proposed in the meetings of the assembly of Jersey.

The grant was voted.

SUPPLY—VOLUNTEER FORCE.] On the question, that the sum of 103,318*l.* 13*s.* 2*d.* be granted to defray the charge of Volunteer Corps for the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, from March, 1833, to March, 1834,

Mr. *Hume* said, he would oppose the Resolution. He appealed to the country gentlemen of England, and he would ask them, whether they could not call out the active and steady loyalty of the country, if they were menaced by insubordination, without resorting to this paltry payment of 4*l.* or 5*l.* It appeared, he knew, in the details, to be a very small sum; but, take it in the aggregate, it was a very large one. With respect to the Irish Volunteers, he would ask, who they were—what they were—and what they did, or were doing? He should like some of the Irish Members then present to inform him, where these Irish Volunteers were, and what was their number? He should move, that the vote be reduced one-half; this would give the Volunteers six months' pay, and would afford the Government an opportunity of inquiring into the necessity of continuing such a force; and, if it were deemed advisable, of totally disbanding them.

Mr. *Ellice* said, that with respect to Ireland, there were a number of men permanently employed as sergeants and drummers. If these men were now dismissed, there would be a very considerable expense incurred for allowances and pensions. He wished much to reduce the expense; and, if the hon. member for Middlesex would leave the matter with him, he would use his best endeavours to lighten the burthen.

Mr. *Jervis* said, the Volunteers of Ireland had been very useful. They had come forward in times of great alarm, and well deserved any trifling remuneration that was given to them.

Mr. *O'Connell* declared, that he did not understand what was meant by "Volunteers" who received pay. They were, in his opinion, not "Volunteers," but labourers for hire. They were like some conscripts of whom he had read. A traveller seeing a number of them linked together, inquired, "Who are these men thus manacled?" "Oh," said his informant, "they are volunteers—going joyfully to serve their country."

Mr. *Jervis:* Did the hon. and learned Member never "volunteer" his services for pay?

Mr. *O'Connell:* Certainly not; never; that is exactly the distinction.

Mr. *Ruthven* declared, that he knew, that those situations of permanent sergeants and drummers were given by persons in authority to their menial servants —to whippers-in, and huntsmen, and stable followers.

Mr. *Ellice* said, he would cause inquiry to be made into the whole subject, especially with respect to the points which had last been noticed, and the evil should be corrected.

Mr. *Shaw* was of opinion, that the yeomanry of Ireland were well worthy of every assistance which could be afforded to them.

Mr. *Hume* wished to know, whether

those who were denominated "Volunteers" had ever been enrolled, and had done service? He thought that this vote ought to be postponed until the right hon. Gentleman had received further and more explicit information on the subject. He should like to know on what ground a corps of yeomanry had been recently raised at Huddersfield.

Mr. *Lewis Fenton* declared, that he knew of no intention to raise such a corps. There was not, at present, any corps, either of cavalry or infantry, at Huddersfield. He had commanded a yeomanry corps in that district from 1829 to 1831, which had not cost the Government one farthing. If there were an intention of raising a corps of yeomanry at Huddersfield, he would say, that there was not a place in England where such a corps would be more useful. In the last winter the conduct of some of the operatives was calculated to excite the most unpleasant feelings.

Mr. *Lamb* said, it was only necessary to draw the attention of the House to the state in which the country was placed at the latter end of 1830, and the beginning of 1831, to prove that the Government had not acted injudiciously in calling on the better sort of yeomanry and farmers to come forward for the protection of life and property. Those individuals had obeyed this call; and it would be most ungracious conduct on the part of his Majesty's Government now to turn on them and say, "it is true you have put down these disturbances, and the expense was trifling, but hereafter you must serve without pay or allowance." In fact, that which the yeomanry received was not pay; it merely went to cover a variety of expenses incidental to the service.

Sir *Edmund Hayes* said, that he thought his Majesty's present Ministers had themselves given the most ample refutation to the unfounded and unwarrantable assertions made respecting the yeomanry, by the member for Dublin, and echoed by the member for Middlesex. He could appeal to the late right hon. Secretary on that subject; it being well known that he, in conjunction with the noble Lord at the head of the Irish Government, in a moment of panic and apprehension, excited by the agitation of the repeal question, put arms into the hands of those very men who are now reviled, thereby proving that they knew their value; and acknowledged, though reluctantly, that in time of danger, they were the men to be really depended on for courage, loyalty, and true friendship to British connexion. Every man who did not participate in the ignorance of the member for Middlesex, knew that to be the case. The present right hon. Gentleman, the Secretary at War, had not been long in office, but it was to be hoped that he did not come forward so profoundly ignorant of the constitution of the service for which the vote of money was asked, as to lend any credence to the wicked and untenable assertions which had been made.

Mr. *Andrew Johnston* said, it would be very satisfactory for him and his constituents to know some good reason for raising such a corps as he had heard was about to be raised in Fife.

Mr. *Robert Wallace* said, it appeared to him that an attempt was set on foot to get up a system similar in Scotland and England to that which prevailed in Ireland, where one class of men was opposed to another class. It was just like the system of Orangemen of Ireland, who were opposed to, and oppressing a different class of people.

Colonel *Perceval* said, the hon. Member who spoke last had shown his ignorance of the state of Ireland. What that hon. Member had advanced was calculated to lower the character of the Orangemen of Ireland. He described them as being unfriendly to those who possessed a different creed. He, as an Orangeman, denied that they entertained any such feeling. The Orangemen, on the contrary, held out the hand of friendship to well-disposed persons of every creed.

Mr. *Walker* declared, that, in his opinion, the yeomanry of Ireland were a party corps, and most active in attempting to put down liberal opinions. They were the chief cause of all the disturbances which took place.

Lord *Belfast* defended the Irish yeomanry, than whom a more respectable body of men did not exist.

Mr. *O'Connell* observed, that in the town (Belfast) which the noble Lord represented, a Catholic could not be buried without the followers of the corpse being brutally fired at by the yeomanry.

Mr. *F. O'Connor* asserted, that the yeomanry force of Ireland had contributed to disturb the peace of the country.

Mr. *Ellice* defended the items of the vote, but expressed his willingness to consent to a deduction, on account of the Huddersfield corps, if his hon. friend insisted on it, after the explanation of the hon. Member in the gallery.

Mr. *Hume* did not say, that he would go so far as to put down the yeomanry force, but wished to withhold the public money from them.

The Committee divided on Mr. Hume's Amendment, that the vote be reduced one half: Ayes *53*; Noes 205—Majority 152.

List of the Ayes.

England.
Aglionby, H. A.
Beauclerk, Major
Bewes, T.
Briscoe, J. I.
Brotherton, J.
Chichester, J. P. B.
Divett, E.
Faithfull, G.
Fancourt, Major
Fielden, J.
Fryer, R.
Grote, G.
Guest, J. J.
Hall, B.
Hawes, B.
Hutt, W.
Lennox, Lord G.
Lloyd, J. H.
Molesworth, Sir W.
Parrott, J.
Potter, R.
Romilly, J.
Scholefield, J.
Seale, Colonel
Tooke, W.
Trelawney, W. L. S.
Vincent, Sir F.
Walter, J.
Warburton, H.
Wason, R.
Wood, Alderman

Scotland.
Gillon, W. D.
Maxwell, Sir J.
Oliphant, L.
Oswald, R. A.
Oswald, J.
Pringle, R.
Wallace, R.

Ireland.
Blake, J.
Fitzgerald, T.
Lalor, P.
Macnamara, Major
O'Brien, C.
O'Connell, D.
O'Connell, C.
O'Connell, J.
O'Connell, M.
O'Connor, F.
Roche, W.
Ronayne, D.
Ruthven, E. S.
Ruthven, E.
Vigors, N. A.

TELLER.
Hume, J.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, May 13, 1833.

Minutes.] Petitions presented. By Earl Fitzwilliam, from the City of York, against further Restriction on Savings Banks; and from Leeds, for the Repeal or Revision of the Corn Laws.—By Earl Cawdor, Lords Kenyon, Barham, and Rolle, and the Bishop of London, from several Places,—against Slavery.—By the Duke of Richmond, from Bexhill, for the same System of Tithes to England that is about to be granted to Ireland.—By Earl Cawdor, from Aberystwith, for some Measure that will render the Established Church more extensively useful.—By the Marquess of Tavistock, from the Protestant Dissenters of Bedford, for Relief with regard to Marriages, Registration, and Church Rates.—By Lord Lyndhurst, from the Commissioners of the Court of Request of Bristol, to Exempt that City from the operation of the Local Jurisdiction Bill.—By the Earls of Cawdor, Uxbridge, Fife, Gosford, Fitzwilliam, Morley, Radnor, and Rosebery, the Duke of Devonshire, the Marquess of Tavistock, Lords Barham, Dinorben, Wharncliffe, Poltimore, Rolle, Suffield, Stanley, Dundas, and Feversham, and the Bishop of London, from a great Number of Places—against Slavery.

Conduct of a Peer.] The Earl of *Winchilsea* said, he felt confident that their Lordships were most zealous to support the high character which they had hitherto maintained. He could not find language to express the deep indignation which he felt at the slur cast on their Lordships' House by the report of a trial which he had seen in the newspapers——

The *Lord Chancellor* begged pardon for interposing to prevent the statement which the noble Earl was about to make, evidently under feelings of the most natural and praiseworthy nature, and in which he himself, with the House generally, perhaps, was inclined to concur. But he prayed the noble Earl to remember, that the noble Lord who was a party in this case stood at present in a peculiar situation. He was not yet properly convicted. A verdict had passed, it was true, but it remained suspended as to its operation. It might never have any, or it might be moved to be set aside. Until the four first days of Term had elapsed, it was quite impossible to tell whether the noble Lord would be convicted or not. Had he known the intention of the noble Earl, he would have taken the opportunity of asking for a few minutes' private conversation on the subject, for the sake of making to him that communication. The noble Person in question must in fact be considered as still on his trial.

The Earl of *Winchilsea* bowed with submission to the noble Lord. He certainly felt strongly upon the subject.

The Duke of *Cumberland* felt excessively happy at the explanation which had taken place. He certainly entered the House under a belief that the noble Lord had been convicted.

The Earl of *Eldon* said, that until the Court of King's Bench had either refused or granted the trial, the case was still in a course of adjudication; therefore, at present, their Lordships were scarcely in a situation to form any judgment.*

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, May 13, 1833.

Minutes.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of Mr. Tooke, an Account of the Number of Certificates taken out Annually by Attornies and Solicitors practising in England and Wales, from the first Day of Easter Term, 1819, to the same Day, 1833: of the Number of Articles of Clerkships of Attornies, and of Assignments thereof, filed in his Majesty's Court of King's Bench in each year for the same Term: also of the gross Annual Amount of Stamp Duties paid upon Admission of Attornies and Solicitors to practise in his Majesty's Courts of King's Bench, Chancery, &c., from the seventh Day of May, 1819, to the same Day, 1833.

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* It was understood that the case referred to in the text was that of Lord Teynham, who had been found guilty in the Court of King's Bench of a conspiracy to defraud. The noble Lord subsequently moved for and obtained a new trial.

New Writ ordered. On the Motion of Mr. Abercrombie, for Tiverton, in the room of Mr. Kennedy, declared unduly elected.

Bills. Read a third time:—Sewers. Committed:—Dower; Curtesy of England; and Inheritance.

Petitions presented. By Mr. Goulburn, from the Clergy of Kilmore, from several Places in Cornwall, and from the University of Cambridge; and by Sir Robert Peel, from the Clergy of Middlesex, and other Places,—against the Church Temporalities (Ireland) Bill.—By Sir Robert Peel, from Plympton, St. Mary, for making the proposed Commutation of Tithes on Fair and Equitable Principles.—By Colonel Leith Hay, from Forres; and by Captain Wemyss, from Queensferry, against the Assessed Taxes.—By Sir Robert Peel, by Mr. Sanderson, General Sharpe, Mr. Forster, Mr. Assheton Smith, Mr. Strutt, Mr. Price, Mr. Richards, Mr. W. A. Williams, Mr. Wilson Patten, Mr. Granville, Mr. H. Vernon, Mr. Crompton, Captain Wemyss, Mr. Barnard, Mr. Byng, Mr. Briscoe, Colonel Leith Hay, Captain Dundas, Mr. J. H. Vivian, General Palmer, Sir W. Folkes, Mr. Parker, Lord Ormelie, Mr. C. Tyrell, Mr. Throckmorton, Captain Elliot, Sir C. J. Greville, Mr. Childers, Mr. Strickland, Mr. Hudson, Mr. Benett, Mr. Harland, Mr. Robert Grant, Mr. J. W. Buller, Mr. Warburton, Mr. Aglionby, Sir C. Lemon, and Mr. Emerson Tennent, from a great Number of Places,—against Slavery.—By Captain Elliot, from Kelso, against any Legislative Enactments for the Better Observance of the Lord's Day.—By Mr. R. Grant, from Waterford, for Removing the Civil Disabilities of the Jews.—By Mr. C. H. Tracy, from the Independents of Tewkesbury, for Relief to the Dissenters.—By Mr. Aglionby, from Harrington, for Inquiry into the Distress of the Owners of Merchant Vessels; and for the Abolition of the Corn Laws.—By Sir Charles Lemon, from St. Keverne, for Removing the Cornwall Assizes from Launceston to Truro.—By Mr. Emerson Tennent, from the Presbyterian Seceders of Tyrone, against the Ministerial System of Education in Ireland.—By Mr. Aglionby, from Cockermouth; Mr. Strickland, from Beominster, and Dewsbury; and by Mr. W. H. Williams, Mr. Wilson Patten, and Mr. Brigstock, from several Places,—against the Sale of Beer Act.—By Mr. T. F. Kennedy, from Ayr and Irvine; General Sharpe, from Sanquhar; and by Captain Wemyss, from Stirling, for Repealing the Duty on Stamp Receipts.—By the Earl of Ormelie, Captain Elliot, and Mr. T. F. Kennedy, from several Places,—for Altering the present System of Church Patronage in Scotland.—By Lord Robert Grosvenor, from Chester, for making Extra Parochial Places, contributory to the Support of the Poor.—By Mr. Strutt, from the Innkeepers of Hastings, for placing Innkeepers on a Footing with other Shopkeepers as regards the Assessed Taxes.—By Mr. Richards, from St. Andrew's, Holborn, for Power to Magistrates to Suppress Dog Fighting, &c.—By Mr. Wilson Patten, from Maryport, against any Alteration in the Timber Duties.—By Mr. Hodgson, from Newcastle, against the Dutch Embargo.—By Captain Wemyss, from Perth and Stirling, for granting to the Irish the Preaching of the Gospel in their own Language.—By the Earl of Ormelie, from Blairgowrie; and Captain Wemyss, from Stirling, for a Factories Regulation Bill.—By Mr. Parker, from the Clergy of Sheffield; and Mr. Duncombe, from the Clergy of the Diocese of Chester,—against the Church Temporalities (Ireland) Bill.—By Mr. Emerson Tennent, from the Members of the Savings Bank, Belfast, against the Savings Bank Annuities Bill.—By the Earl of Ormelie, from the Highlands of Perthshire, against the Reduction of the Malt Drawback; also from the Society of Procurators in Perthshire, for a Repeal of the Duty on Certificates of Solicitors, Attornies, &c.; and from the Burgh of Abernethy, for the Abolition of the Church of Ireland, and Appropriating its Revenues to the Reduction of the National Debt.

Business of Committees.] Mr. Benett brought up the Report of the Committee, with the Amendments, on the Bath and Warminster Road Bill, and moved that they be read.

Mr. *Henry Baring* objected to the Amendments of the Committee. The evidence of Mr. M'Adam, Mr. Rennie, and Mr. Mills, went to disprove the necessity for the road, and the propriety of the proposed line. He moved, as an Amendment, that the Report be read that day six months.

Mr. *Benett* supported the reading of the Report and Amendments, and the propriety of passing the Bill, upon the grounds of its being virtually intended to improve the road between Bath and Frome.

Mr. *Estcourt* was convinced that danger would arise to extensive canal property by the proposed line of road. He understood the proposition to be to postpone the reading of the Report and Amendments to that day six months; but he would waive his support to that Motion, if certain clauses in the Bill, which he chiefly objected to, were given up. The proposed road was a wild and extravagant speculation.

Mr. *Roebuck* said, the only real opponent to the Bill was Mr. Vivian; the others put forward were mere men of straw. There was, however, in the case of the Committee upon this Bill, a great public question, to which it was fit that the House should direct its attention, and as early as possible apply a remedy. It was a great public matter, although connected with a private Bill. The Committee was asked by the counsel for Mr. Vivian to adjourn the Committee. He was answered that Mr. Vivian had had twelve months to oppose the Bill, and the counsel then said: "Well, Gentlemen, I will tell you candidly what I mean to do. I will examine witnesses who will give you no information; but who will take up your time till the week I want is completed. I will have the week some way or other." He succeeded in his object. Such a power, lodged in the hands of counsel, was incompatible with the due discharge of the duties of Committees of the House, and ought to be put an end to. The proper remedy, in his opinion was, that Committees should be empowered to give costs. The road would not interfere with Mr. Vivian's privacy, and it was nothing but caprice which offered opposition to the general good. It was this view of the matter which induced him to support the original Motion, which was agreeable to the interests and wishes of his constituents.

The House divided on the original Motion:—Ayes 49; Noes 37—Majority 12.

CHURCH TEMPORALITIES (IRELAND).] On the Order of the Day being read for the House resolving itself into a Committee of the whole House on the Irish Church Reform Bill,

Lord Althorp signified to the House that his Majesty had been graciously pleased to place at the disposal of Parliament his interests in the temporalities and custody thereof, of the several bishoprics and archbishoprics in Ireland. The noble Lord then moved that the Speaker leave the Chair.

Mr. *Lefroy* said, in rising to avail himself of the indulgence of the House as expressed at the conclusion of the debate on a former night, he trusted, in the line which he meant to take, he should not prove himself unworthy of their indulgence, for at the same time that he should freely and boldly state his objections, he hoped to satisfy the House that he did not make objections merely for the sake of objecting, as he was prepared at the same time to offer such suggestions as to his mind appeared calculated to counteract the mischievous and dangerous principles which were involved in some at least of the provisions of the Bill. He should have to refer to details which might at first appear to some hon. Members better suited to a future stage of the Bill, but he preferred referring to them at the present moment, in order that the Committee might be the better prepared to consider his suggestions when the particular clauses to which they had reference should be brought before them, and to give to them any weight to which they might be entitled. On behalf of the Church in Ireland he desired nothing but that her cause should be fairly heard. He desired nothing but that the House should legislate for her upon principles of justice—upon the ordinary and avowed principles of legislation—upon such principles, in fact, as the House would legislate on for the Church in England. He was aware, on entering upon the subject, that he had to contend against the prejudices of two classes. In the first place he had opposed to him the prejudices of those who contended that the Established Church in Ireland was altogether useless; and in the next place the prejudices of those who considered the endowment of that establishment to be so enormous that they were willing to reduce it in any way possible, without attending very strictly to the means by which that object was to be effected. With respect to the first class, he would entreat hon. Members not to allow their prepossessions against an establishment to influence their judgment on the question as to the extent of maintenance necessary for its support—if it were to be continued; and he would beg to call the attention of hon. Members of both classes to the words of the noble Lord the Chancellor of the Exchequer on introducing the measure to the House. Speaking of the endowments of the Established Church in Ireland, he said:—"I can say conscientiously that a greater exaggeration has prevailed on this subject, than on any political topic which I recollect. Before I looked more narrowly into the question, I myself, greatly exaggerated in my own mind, the amount of the revenues of the Irish Church establishment.*" The present measure had been called a measure of Reform for the Church in Ireland. On the subject of Reform, he (Mr. Lefroy) did not stand there to contend for the existence of one single abuse—he should little represent the feelings or sentiments of the clergy of Ireland were he to advocate the existence of any abuse that could be fairly proved to exist in the Church. As little did he stand there to resist an equitable distribution of the property of the Church, or the better appropriation of its revenues for the great end of the establishment, the advancement and support of the Protestant religion—but he stood there to resist the alienation of Church property—he stood there to resist the proposition of legislating for Ireland on different principles from those on which the House would legislate for England — he stood there to resist legislating upon a principle which must endanger the connexion between the two countries, and which must have the effect of raising a serious question with respect to the Coronation Oath. All these principles were involved in the Bill in its present frame, and he had no hesitation in calling them dangerous and mischievous: and he would add, that the Bill, in many of its more detailed provisions, operated injuriously to the Church and to the clergy, and unfairly with respect to the Protestant religion and the Protestant inhabitants of Ireland. He should apply himself to the several objects of the Bill, as set out in the preamble. The first was the abolition of the payment of first fruits in Ireland. To that it was not his intention to offer any objection; and he would, therefore, proceed to the next object, which purported to be the substitution of an annual tax in lieu thereof. If the annual tax proposed to be substituted bore any proportion to the tax abolished, he would offer no objection to it; but he begged the attention of the House to the manifest injustice of calling this a substitution of one tax for another. The average charge of the first fruits in Ireland, for the last thirty-one years, amounted to 321*l.* per annum on the whole body of the clergy; whereas the tax proposed to be substituted by the noble Lord amounted to 69,000*l.* The first-fruit tax was payable out of 428 parishes, whereas the proposition of the noble Lord went to the extent of taxing all parishes of the value of 200*l.* per year and upwards. The first question he should, therefore, submit to the justice of the House was—was a tax of 69,000*l.* annually a fair substitute for a tax that produced 321*l.* a-year? The next appeal he should make to the justice and good sense of the House was this—whether the existing provision for the parochial clergy will admit of this, or any other substantial reduction, consistently with allowing them adequate maintenance and support? If they are not to have a parochial clergy at all, let the question be boldly put, and then the House would know how to deal with it; but if the parochial clergy were to be continued, the House was bound in common sense and justice to afford them a decent competency; a competency for men educated as gentlemen, having to live as such—having families to support—duties to perform, with which were connected services of charity and humanity, and those services, in a country circumstanced as Ireland was, they were frequently called upon to perform. It should be recollected, too, that they were shut out by law from any other maintenance; they were disabled from being land agents or farmers, or following secular occupations. Surely no hon. Member would consider an income of 300*l.* or 400*l.* a year extravagant, under such circumstances—and such was the average provision of the parochial clergy in Ireland. The noble Lord stated the number of the parochial clergy at 1,400, and their income at 580,000*l.* or 600,000*l.* annually: this would give an average income to each clergyman, without deducting any of the charges to which that income was subjected, of 428*l.* a year. The Bill of last Session took off fifteen per cent from the incomes of the clergy, which would reduce this sum to 335*l.* per annum. There were maintained in Ireland 662 curates, being about half the number of rectors; and if from each rector (on an average) the moiety of a curate's salary were deducted it would make a further reduction of 35*l.*, leaving a nett average sum of 300*l.* per annum for the maintenance of the parochial clergy. He had proceeded on the same data as the noble Lord himself, and was bold to challenge any hon. Member to detect a single fallacy in his statement. Here, then, it was proved, that the average sum would be 300*l.* a-year—the minimum, be it observed, upon which (according to the general sense of the House) the tax should be levied, if to be at all imposed. In connexion with this point, he would beg to request the attention of the House to the Speech from the Throne, in which his Majesty desires Parliament "to consider if any alterations may be made, without diminishing the means of maintaining the established clergy in respectability and usefulness." He was sure the noble Lord and the House would consider that diminishing the incomes of the clergy below the average which he had just proved those incomes to be at present, would not be consistent with maintaining their respectability and usefulness. It could make no difference in the argument, that the livings were unequally apportioned—part of the object of the present Bill was to equalize the livings, and instead of cramping the usefulness of the clergy, the House ought rather if possible to increase their numbers and their means of rendering benefit to the country. He would next beg to call the attention of the House to the principle on which the tax was to be levied in lieu of the Vestry-cess. It was proposed to lay a tax on one body of men, to which that body was not now subject, and to remove from another body of men a tax to which they were subject. By the common law, the keeping the Church in proper repair was a duty incident to the land—a person though resident in one parish who occupied land in another was liable for the repairs of the Church in the parish in which his land was situate. No precedent could be found for the principle here suggested. It was said, it was introduced for the purpose of relieving the Roman Catholic tenantry of Ireland, but it was in point of fact relieving the Protestant landlords and the Protestant tenantry from an impost to which they were now liable. The same system was to extend from the north to the south of Ireland, and therefore it could not be considered in the light of a relief afforded to the Roman Catholic tenantry. Would the House on that important point, on a point which involved the question, whether particular classes should be subject to particular burthens, legislate on one principle for Ireland, and on another for England? Should the present measure pass into a law, what possible ground could there be why the English Roman Catholic and the Dissenter should not be relieved from the burthen of Church and vestry rates—and if that could not be done without abandoning all principles heretofore acknowledged, on what grounds, he would ask, was it that the House was called upon to legislate for Ireland in the way proposed by the Bill before the House? He admitted, that in some particulars the Vestry-cess pressed more severely in Ireland than Church rates in England—and to that extent he had no objection that relief should be afforded. By Acts of Parliament peculiar to Ireland the parish was made liable for the building of churches as well as the repairs—and these sums were voted by exclusive vestries, from which Roman Catholics and Dissenters were excluded. As this was a parliamentary provision, he thought it was competent to Parliament to alter it, and assimilate the law in both countries—but in order to provide effectually for the common law right of repairs, and at the same time to obviate the objection of the cess being arbitrary, or uncertain, to which it was liable when laid on by an exclusive vestry, he had a proposition to submit, which if carried into effect, would obviate all the difficulty attendant upon the present system. He proposed that the small sum of a penny an acre should be levied on all profitable land in Ireland. In this way, upon the rental returned by Mr. Griffith, which he estimates at 14,600,000 acres, but taking it at 12,000,000, a penny an acre would produce 50,000*l.* a-year. That sum would be quite sufficient to cover the amount proposed to be levied of the parochial clergy. The noble Lord, by adopting this commutation or composition, might get rid of the objections to the Vestry-cess—he might get rid of everything objectionable to the feelings of the Roman Catholics. The sum might be made payable by the landlord with his quit rent. Let no application be made to the tenantry; and he was not, he thought, saying too much for the landlords of Ireland, when he stated their willingness to consent to the payment of a penny per acre, or a penny in the pound, to secure the peace and harmony of their country, as well as maintaining in proper repair the churches which had been built for their use and accommodation. If the House were to be guided by a principle of justice in laying on a tax, there was no doubt which they would choose between the parochial clergy — whose incomes were reduced to the average he had stated—and the landlords of Ireland; there was no doubt that they would prefer to laying on a graduated Property-tax of from five to fifteen per cent upon the income of the clergy, making the profitable land of Ireland pay at the rate of one penny an acre. But if the noble Lord should persist in taxing the clergy, was there any justice in exempting the lay impropriator? The noble Lord must be aware, or if not the law officers of the Crown could inform him, that by law the lay impropriator is bound to find spiritual persons to perform the spiritual duties of the Church. Upon what principle then was it that the clergy alone should be taxed for providing that which the law said was to be done by the lay impropriator? He conceived, that the lay impropriator was bound to bear these expenses, and he made it a strong objection to the Bill, that it imposed this tax on the clergy, and spared the lay impropriators. He would next proceed to that part of the Bill which provided for the consolidation of bishoprics. If any objection existed to the system of pluralities in inferior benefices, stronger objections surely ought to exist to the system of pluralities in these higher offices of the Church, which were established for the very purpose of superintendence. This provision of the Bill rested upon convenience. The preamble stated, that the number of Bishops might be conveniently diminished. In the first instance he would try the measure by that test. The right hon. Gentleman, now the Secretary for the Colonies, made a statement on a former evening, and entered into a comparison of the number of benefices under the superintendence of an English Bishop with those under an Irish Bishop, when the sees should be consolidated; but the right hon. Gentleman did not state to the House the extent of surface over which such superintendence was spread. It was easy to talk of 1,200 livings being under the superintendence of one Bishop, when these livings were brought within a reasonable compass. He (Mr. Lefroy) would now state the result of his inquiries as to the extent and surface of country over which the jurisdiction of the Bishops under the proposed consolidation would extend. The united dioceses of Raphoe and Kerry would occupy a surface of 1,888,000 acres. The jurisdiction would extend over a space of 115 miles in length and ninety-four in breadth. The united dioceses of Tuam and Killala would occupy a surface of 2,652,000 acres, and an extent in length of 147 miles by eighty-four miles in breadth. The united dioceses of Ossory and Ferns would occupy a superficies of 1,267,000 acres, and an extent of 136 miles in length, and sixty-three miles in breadth. Cork and Ross, when united with Cloyne, would occupy a surface of 1,632,000 acres, and an extent of 169 miles in length and fifty-three in breadth. These were the four largest, but the least, the Arch-See of Cashel united to the see of Waterford would contain 1,233,000 acres, and be 127 miles in length, and ninety in breadth. Now, if the House were to consider for a moment in what the duties of a Bishop consisted—the number of visitations and confirmations they were obliged to attend—the number of communications that must pass between him and his clergy, it would be at once perceived how impossible it was that the duties should be adequately performed. In England the duty of the visitations was performed by the Archdeacons and the superintendence of the buildings by the rural Deans; but in Ireland the Bishops performed the duties of the Archdeacons; and here he would beg leave to refer to the authority of one who could have no Irish prejudices upon the subject—he alluded to the Archbishop of Cashel. His Grace stated in his petition that the Archdeacons in Ireland exercised no jurisdiction original or delegated. Should the proposed reductions in the Archbishops take place, the two who were to remain would have to discharge the duties of the triennial visitations over one-half of Ireland, besides the annual visitations in their peculiar dioceses. The House might have learnt from the petitions from Killala and other places, that the prosperity, if not the very existence of the small towns depended upon the residence of the Bishops. Great injury must be inflicted also upon the great towns of Waterford, Cork, and Kilkenny, by the removal of the sees. It was true, as stated by the right hon. Secretary on a former night, that the Bishop might, if he chose, reside in either of the towns—but it was equally true that he might choose not to do so. At all events, ten sees were to be deprived of their Bishops—ten Bishops' palaces would be set up to sale, and it was no difficult matter to prophesy who would become the purchasers of them. It might be a subject of sneer and merriment to the right hon. Gentleman, but those houses would unquestionably be purchased by the Roman Catholic Bishops in Ireland. If there were any consideration remaining for the Protestant establishment, he would put it to the sympathy and feeling of English gentlemen what must be the effect produced on the Protestants of Ireland, when they saw ten of their Bishops cast out, and their places filled by the heads of a rival Church? Would that be no injury to the Protestant establishment—no wound to Protestant feelings? His Majesty's Government might feel indifferent between the two religions, but they ought not to be indifferent to this—that the strong hold of British connexion was the Protestant establishment in Ireland. These were the words of Lord Plunkett, and formerly the sentiments of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for the Colonies. How, he would ask, was this consolidation (destruction he should rather call it), how could it be represented as a measure of Reform for the benefit of the Protestant religion? It was not as in England where the Church was supported by a large body of the people. In Ireland the Church was existing as if it were in an enemy's country, and in the face of a rival Church—a rival which not only opposed it as a Church, but exposed its ministers to a series of persecution and oppression. How, he would ask, was this consolidation reconcilable with the Act of Union? But the noble Lord on a former night had very nearly conceded that point to the right hon. Baronet, the member for Tamworth. The noble Lord said, that though it might be a violation of the letter, it was not a violation of the spirit of the Act of Union. He hoped his Majesty's Ministers would bear in mind that the great motive which induced the Protestants of Ireland to concur in the Act of Union, was the permanence and security of their Episcopal Church. The abolition of these bishoprics would be considered by them as a fundamental violation of the scriptural constitution of that Church. The measure was proposed not only without the concurrence of the heads of the Church, but in direct opposition to their wishes. As a proof of which, he would mention that he had had the honour on a former evening of presenting a petition from one Archbishop and twelve Bishops, specially against the Bill. His right hon. friend, the member for Tamworth, had presented a similar petition from the Archbishop of Cashel, and also one from the Primate and the clergy of his diocese. Another petition had been presented that evening from the Bishop of Cloyne; thus it appeared that three Archbishops and fourteen Bishops making seventeen out of the whole number of twenty-two, had petitioned against the Bill; of the remaining five, one Archbishop and two Bishops had been appointed by his Majesty's present Government, and it was, therefore, scarcely to be expected that they would have petitioned against the measure; but had they petitioned in favour of it, or had they even given it their sanction? Of the two remaining Bishops, one of them was in such a delicate state of health, that he could not be expected to take an active part, or to express an opinion upon the subject. An unguarded statement had been made on a former evening by the right hon. Gentleman, that the reduction of the number of Bishops was made on the suggestion of the Primate [*"No, no," from Mr. Stanley.*] He took down the words of the right hon. Gentleman at the time, but if the right hon. Gentleman denied having intended to use them, he had no wish to pin down the right hon. Gentleman to words used in the heat of debate. His disclaimer, however, fully warranted him in stating that the Primate had not suggested this measure; and indeed the petition of his Grace clearly showed that whatever reluctant assent had been given, was extorted under the threat of an alternative which must have been more ruinous to the Church, and in utter ignorance that any other funds existed for making good the Vestry-cess, which his Majesty's Government were determined to abolish. He, however, would ask his Majesty's Government whether it would dare to legislate for the Church of England, not only without, but against the concurrence of the Bishops? He only asked the House to legislate for Ireland on the same principle, unless they meant to give countenance to the assertion of the hon. and learned Gentleman the member for Dublin, that they legislated for Ireland as a province. There had been already another serious objection raised to this Bill, but he did not mean now to dwell upon the argument, as some difference of opinion upon the subject had been expressed on that (the Opposition) side of the House, but he could not forego the opportunity of stating, that in his mind the Crown could not assent to the measure for the abolition of the Bishops, or the alienation of Church property, without a violation of the Coronation Oath. It was said that because former consolidations took place, the same thing might be done now. But in all former instances of consolidation the revenues of the sees were preserved, but in the present instance the revenues were to be severed for ever from the sees, and vested in Commissioners, not for the maintenance of the see, but to be appropriated to other purposes. In many of the former instances where sees had been consolidated, they were afterwards separated. Ardagh and Cloyne were both instances of this sort—but this he was bold to assert, that there never was a consolidation but in consequence of the poverty of one of the sees, and its incompetency to maintain a Bishop. He had looked through Ware, and he found no instance recorded, except on the ground of poverty. Even the Roman Catholic Church scrupulously kept up the number of Bishops and so jealous were they of maintaining that number, that they named Bishops to places in distant lands, where not even a Roman Catholic was to be found. Whether the House, therefore, viewed this question as a matter of expediency, or upon the ground of principle, it was equally objectionable. The Bill proposed to make an alteration in the fundamental constitution of the Church, without even the alleged ground of convenience to recommend it, and against the strenuous remonstrances as well of the Bishops and Clergy as of the lay portion of the Protestant community. The tendency of the measure must be to create an oligarchy in the Church; and would the noble Lord, who laboured so hard to put an end to an oligarchy in the State, consent to the establishment of an oligarchy in the Church? Did he believe that the general patronage of the Church would be better distributed for the end for which it was established—namely, the cause of religion—by being confined to a few Bishops, appointed by Government? But if there must be a retrenchment made in the provisions for the Bishops in Ireland—if the noble Lord was determined to lay hands upon a part of their revenues—he trusted the noble Lord would at least give attention to the suggestion, whether it might not be more prudent to reduce the incomes of some of them than reduce their numbers. With respect to Archbishops he was free to confess, that he did not look upon the existence of four in the light of a fundamental article of the Church. If the noble Lord were to reduce three Archbishops to the state of Bishops—leaving one Archbishop for all Ireland, and reduce the emoluments of some of the large sees, a fund would be placed at his disposal equivalent to that he proposes to raise by the abolition of ten bishoprics. The Archbishop of Dublin could discharge the appellate jurisdiction belonging to the other Archbishops, and by thus adopting the mode proposed, the noble Lord would avoid all occasion of offence to the feelings of the Protestants; he would get rid of the difficulties as to the violation of the Coronation Oath, and he would get rid of the question of the Union. He hoped that the noble Lord would take these propositions into his consideration—and if he must lay hands upon any part of the revenues of the Bishops, that he would do it in the way now proposed. The next subject to which he should address himself was as to the proposed plan for granting the fee to the Bishops' tenants. This proposition involved two questions, one as to a matter of expediency, in respect both to the Bishops and their tenants, the other as to the appropriating the fund. With respect to the question of expediency, he considered it to be fraught with danger to the Bishops. The proposal was, to give the Bishop a rent charge—to make him a pensioner on his own estate—but to keep up his income, it was proposed to give him a corn rent. He could not conceive a more pregnant source of dissatisfaction in such a country as Ireland, than the establishing a corn rent was likely to prove. If the tenant were not satisfied with the amount of his rent, what was to prevent him from resisting the payment of that rent, as effectually as he now resisted the payment of tithe composition rent. As the matter now stood, the Bishop was sure of his income. The tenant, in order to obtain a renewal, must come to the Bishop with his rent as well as his fine; but if the Bishop were a mere rent-charger, the same objection might be raised to paying him, that was now raised to the payment of tithe; the doctrine of passive resistance would be resorted to, and the Bishops of Ireland would be thrown into a similar situation to that in which the parochial clergy were now unhappily placed. With respect to the tenants they were not desirous of availing themselves of the privileges on the terms proposed. He would venture to state, that the proposition would not be considered as a boon by the tenantry. But let the House look to those who derived as under tenants, and who held by *toties quoties* clauses of renewal. Let the House consider the situation those persons would be placed in who had derivative leases, and who had expended large sums on improvement, on the faith that no increase in their rent or fines should take place; and yet they had to contribute to the purchase money to be paid by their landlords. The provision in the Bill was, that tenants for life were to raise the money for the purchase of the fee, and this was to be a charge on the property. Were settlements thus to be swept away? This was such an infringement upon private property that he for one could never concur in it. He saw no remedy for all the complicated questions which must arise between these different interests but the filing of a petition in Chancery—a reference to a master, with power to except and bring the whole before the court to adjust, without any rule or standard by which to make the adjustment. The remedy would be, in fact, worse than the disease, and it would be better, at once to legislate with the strong hand of power, and fix a rule, however arbitrary, than throw into such a mass of litigation and expense all private rights and interests in Church property. Now, as to the principle of the measure which would sanction the appropriation of the purchase money of this perpetuity to other than Church purposes.—the right hon. Gentleman said, on a former night, that this was a new creation—that the Bishop had it not—the tenant had it not; and as the Legislature created it, so the Legislature had a right to appropriate it. He (Mr. Lefroy) knew of nothing to compare to that doctrine, except what he had heard called in Ireland, "improving a gentleman out of his estate." A man obtained wrongfully possession of another's property, and immediately set about improving it, and then the improvements were made a bar to the claim of the right owner. So it was with the right hon. Gentleman—he would improve the Church out of its estate. But it was really putting words for things, when the right hon. Gentleman argued thus. The reversion which it was proposed the tenant should get, whether in fee or for a long term, was now in the Church, and was just as much the property of the Church as the rent, which is payable on the twenty-one years' lease, and which is annexed to this very reversion. He regretted that none of the law-officers of the Crown were present when he was pressing this part of the case, as he would challenge them or any lawyer to assert, that this reversion was not as much the property of the Church as the rent which was incident to it. It was the right to this reversion which enabled the Bishop to say to the tenant—"If you agree to pay a reasonable fine in addition to the old rent, I will renew with you; but if not, I will refuse to renew, and run my life against the lease—and I or my successor will enter upon the land on the expiration of the lease under our title to this reversion." It was this reversion which enabled the Bishops to have a new valuation of Church lands during the period of the last war, and greatly to increase the amount of their sees; and if that did not constitute property in reversion, he did not know the meaning of the term. He might, perhaps, be told by the right hon. Gentleman, that this was special pleading. He would rather be taxed with being a technical special pleader, than be charged with being an ignorant statesman. The right hon. Gentleman's assumption that this property was not in the Church, was without the slightest foundation; he challenged the right hon. Gentleman to produce the opinion of a single lawyer of any eminence to contradict his assertion. He should like to ask, where was the reversion when the Church was first endowed with the property which it still inherits? An Act of Parliament restrained the Bishops from granting leases for a longer period than twenty-one years; but did it take the reversion of the rest of it out of the Church? He would ask, if the restraining statute were now simply repealed, where would be the reversion? He would tell the right hon. Gentleman where — namely, in the Church, where it had been before, and ever since it was first endowed. The lands were held under grants and charters from the Crown, in as large terms of dominion and ownership as those which conferred land upon Lay Corporations or individuals; and, unless charters were to go for nothing, he maintained that the Church had a right to as much dominion over its property as any individual or corporation had who held lands under the Crown. A Bishop was described by all law writers as being seised of the estate in right of his Church—the enjoyment and usufruct was in the Bishop—the property was in the Church. But there was another false principle involved in the argument of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman said, that when the State enabled by additional powers a beneficial use to be made of property, it was entitled to share in the benefit. That was not so. But in this instance what was it but the State removing fetters which itself had imposed; and what sort of logic or justice was it that went to show, that when the State imposed fetters for the protection of property, the removal of those fetters was to invest it with the property itself? In other instances where the Legislature had given balanced leasing powers to those having limited interests, it never had claimed to share in the benefits. As in the statutes enabling husbands seized in right of their wives, or tenants in tail, to make long leases, so ecclesiastical persons were authorised to make long leases of mines—

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* Hansard (third series) xvi. p. 566.

so were tenants for life — but did the Legislature or State ever think of sharing in the emolument derivable under such a power? He was at a loss to understand how the endowment of the Church of Ireland could be looked upon in any less favourable light than the endowment for any other forms of religious worship. There might be an endowment for any form of dissenting worship, and a Court of Equity could protect it as a trust, and would prevent the trustees granting leases in perpetuity. Could the Legislature interfere, and allow the trustees of that sort of property to grant perpetual leases at corn rents, and then step in and take to itself the benefits resulting from such a permission? If not, why should the Legislature treat an endowment for the established national religion differently from an endowment for any form of dissenting worship? He trusted, that while an established national religion subsisted, that the endowment for its maintenance, whether in England or Ireland, would not have a less measure of protection than that appropriated to any other form of religious faith—that it was not to be judged of merely by a scrutiny of the numbers who were entitled to claim the benefit of the trust, or to forfeit its right because there was a large body who did not choose to entitle themselves. The only remaining topic which he meant to press upon the attention of the House was that with respect to the provisions of the Bill which established the Board, and which regulated the system under which the affairs of the Church of Ireland were to be conducted in future. He could not but feel with respect to this portion of the measure, that nothing more injurious to the Church could be contemplated. It would have the effect of laying the Church at the feet of the Government by placing it under the control of its paid Commissioners. The system was one that was full of oppression and injury to the clergy—hurtful to the feelings of the Protestants of Ireland, and every way calculated to discourage and retard the progress of Protestantism in that country. The Bill proposed to establish a Commission, composed partly of lay and partly of ecclesiastical persons. It was true the Primate and three other Bishops were to have seats at this Board, but there were to be three lay Commissioners, at salaries appointed by the Lord-lieutenant, and removable at pleasure. With these there were to be two other lay Commissioners, the Lord Chancellor of Ireland and the Chief Justice of the King's Bench, thus making a majority of lay Commissioners. These Commissioners would be at liberty to make bye-laws with the consent of the Lord-lieutenant, on every subject embraced by this Bill. These bye-laws might be made, and every act (even the most solemn acts, requiring the seal of the corporation) might be completed without the concurrence of, or even the presence of, a single Bishop. They would have the power of appointing to several subordinate offices, Treasurer, Secretary, and other officers, and the salaries would all have to be provided for out of the funds of the Church. To this Board every clergyman would have to make a return of the value of his living and to pay his tax, and it would be competent for it to revert to the original valuation, and to revalue the livings whenever it thought fit; and although the return of the clergyman should prove quite correct, he would be liable nevertheless to pay the costs of the inquiry. If the tax were not paid regularly every half-year, the Board would have the power of proceeding in the Court of Chancery or Exchequer, to obtain a sequestration. He thought it a great hardship that the tax should be laid on half-yearly, when it was known that the incomes of the clergy were only received annually; but the Bill enabled the Board, if the tax should not be paid punctually every half-year, to sequester the living, and to make the clergyman pay not only costs but interest —interest on the miserable sum of *5l.*, a half-yearly instalment of the poorer clergy's tax. He could not but read in this Bill a spirit of hostility to the Church, when he contrasted it with the measure passed in the last Session. The Bill would in fact subject the clergy to the grossest oppression. When a bill was brought in to enable the clergyman to recover his tithe, a clause was introduced in favour of those who wrongfully withheld it, throwing the costs on the clergyman's fund, even when the agitator was proved to be wrong in resisting the demand. He was to be sued in the Civil Bill Court, but the clergyman was to be sued in Chancery or the Exchequer for *5l.* See the effects of this Bill as to another of its provisions. Every clergyman who wanted a loan to build a glebe-house must come to this

Board. This would have the effect of putting the whole of the parochial clergy of Ireland under the control of the Board, and the parochial clergy constituted a very influential portion of the constituencies of the counties in Ireland. He knew from experience to what extent Government influence was used in Ireland to resist a candidate who was opposed to Government and to support a friendly candidate. He would therefore, say, that through the medium of this Board the body of the clergy would be placed under the political influence of Government. Whether this would be a Reform of the Church, or lessen its abuses, the House would judge. With respect to the building of churches, according to the Bill, no church could be built unless a certain sum should be subscribed by the parish—that was, the poor Protestants were to be precluded from having a church in which to attend divine service. It had been given as a mark of divine truth that "to the poor the gospel was to be preached"—but the present Bill said to the poor the gospel is not to be preached—for the poor there were to be no churches. The Board of First Fruits, where the income of the clergyman did not exceed 100*l.* a-year, gave him 350*l.* as a gift towards building a glebe-house. The present Bill precluded the Board from making any gift exceeding 50*l.*, and that only to the clergyman whose living did not exceed 50*l.* per annum. He could not but consider this as an absolute mockery. But what was the great apology for erecting this new Board and abolishing the Board of First Fruits? The House had been told the Bishops would not have leisure to discharge these duties. He would inform the House what duties had been discharged by the Board of First Fruits since the Union. He held in his hand a return of the sums administered by them during that period. They expended no less a sum than 1,195,500*l.*, This sum was expended in building 746 churches, in building 552 glebe-houses, and in purchasing 203 glebe-lands. The rest was expended in purchasing impropriate tithes, for the purpose of adding to small livings. And to what expense to the Church was this effected? At not more than 960*l.* annually. He would beg to call the attention of the hon. member for Middlesex to the economy with which this Board had done its work. There was to be, according to this Bill, instead of that Board, three paid Commissioners, with a Treasurer, Secretary, and other salaried officers. They were to have this costly establishment at an expense probably of above 10,000*l.* instead of a Board which cost only 960*l.* Let the noble Lord continue the Board of First Fruits, and he had no doubt that with an additional secretary, the Bishops would perform all the duties which it was proposed by the Bill to transfer to the new Board. The adoption of this plan to be sure would cause a diminution of patronage to the Government—but patronage was not an object with the present Government, and would effect a considerable saving in the property of the Church. There were other strong objections to this Bill, but having detained the House so long, he should postpone them for the Committee. One observation he must, however, make before sitting down. A Commission had been issued last Session for the purpose of inquiring into the state of the Church in Ireland. That Commission had diligently pursued its inquiries, and a great deal of information had been obtained. He regretted, that the present measure was not postponed until that information had been laid before the House. He knew not why Ministers should have brought it forward so precipitately, unless as a set-off against the measure of coercion. It would look as if his Majesty's Ministers had committed an oversight in the progress of their great Reform measure; they seemed to have forgotten that the monster they were creating would require to be fed; and, accordingly, when great clamour was raised by the new constituency for some fruit of reform, a limb of the Irish Church appeared the next thing at hand, and it was offered to appease their clamorous appetite for a while. But his Majesty's Ministers were greatly mistaken if they supposed the appetite for spoliation once being indulged, that they could satisfy it with the Church in Ireland, or even with the Church in England. They ought not to forget, that the first concession which was made at the French Revolution, was the Church. They all knew how soon the aristocracy, the monarchy, and the spoliation of all property followed. He trusted that this country was not come to that point; but if his Majesty's Ministers continued to give way to clamour—if they went on to legislate upon principles utterly destructive of property, utterly subversive of the fundamental constitution of our Church, and calculated to disturb the relations which existed between England and Ireland—if they went on abandoning one principle after another, they must come at last to that point at which they would have to choose between the institutions of the country with the monarchy, or the establishment of a democratic republic and an agrarian law. But they might, by reverting to principles and holding by them, by maintaining that established religion under which this great nation had so signally prospered, hope to avert the evil; but if principle were to be sacrificed to expediency, the House could anticipate no other results than those he had predicted.

Mr. *French* trusted he should receive from the House that indulgence they had uniformly extended to Members addressing them the first time. He assured them he had not risen with the intention of embarrassing his Majesty's Ministers, or of offering any vexatious opposition to the satisfactory arrangement of the great, the difficult question now under their consideration; on the contrary, the leading provisions of the Bill he was willing to agree to; and though objecting to some of the minor details, he must acknowledge, in substance and principle, the measure to be, with one exception, manly, comprehensive, and wise. A diminution in the incomes of Bishops, as recommended by the hon. member for the University of Dublin, an augmentation of the smaller livings, a per-centage on the Church income—all these he was inclined to support. The abolition of the Church-rate and vestry cess would, he trusted, be viewed as a boon by the peasantry of Ireland, and that their gratitude for it would be manifested in the most honourable of all ways, by their returning to the pursuits of industry, and habits of subordination. He objected to, and would confine his observations to one feature only of this important measure —the proposed change in the tenure of the Church lands, which, after rendering the renewal fine, at present voluntary, the payment of which hitherto had been deemed sufficient to secure the perpetuity —after compelling the tenant to surrender the interest which the accumulation of that fine would amount to in twenty-one years, demanded so many years' purchase of the beneficial interest—he felt it his duty to protest against this, as unjust and impolitic—as utterly ruinous to the tenant whose interest it professed to serve. It actually proposed that a double purchase should be given for the thing offered for sale. It was a measure the effects of which he was confident Ministers did not at that moment understand, or they would not urge so unjust a demand. The fund, as proposed, could never be called into existence; the perpetuity would not be purchased; renewal fines would be paid, and advantages would not be surrendered, which, independent of one hour's purchase of the beneficial interest, were to the holders of the Church lands, worth between 6,000,000*l.* and 7,000,000*l.* Justice was all they required; and he felt assured that the House, once in possession of the circumstances of the case, would never permit so sweeping a confiscation, so gross an invasion on the most sacred of all rights—that of individual private property. This demand was founded on the supposition that the proportion of the perpetuity intended to be disposed of was superior in value to the tenant's interest as it at present existed; that such was not the case, he trusted to be able to prove to the satisfaction of the House—that the basis of the proposed arrangements, in fact the premises assumed by the noble Lord, were utterly fallacious—that he had miscalculated the values, both present and future, and that a peculiar advantage the tenant now possessed had not even been alluded to by the noble Lord. He felt he had need of the patience of the House; that this was a question of dry detail, and numerical calculation, affecting exclusively a particular description of Irish property, therefore not likely to be very familiar or very interesting to the majority of those he had the honour to address; and he would willingly have deferred the observations he had to make until the clauses came before them in Committee, but that he felt the statement of the noble Lord had remained too long unanswered—that it was due to the House and to those interested in the question, that the errors of that statement should be pointed out. The noble Lord had described and had argued on this tenure as a twenty years' lease—he contended that the tenant had, to all intents and purposes, a permanent interest, and that this Bill would but give him that perpetuity in name he had long possessed in fact. In proving this assertion it would be necessary for him briefly to allude to the history of this tenure, originally created by the 10th and 11th of Charles 1st. by which Act Bishops were empowered to grant leases for twenty-one years on reserving as rent half the actual value of the day. It became the custom, on receiving a sum of money—originally amounting to one-twelfth, but latterly, during the continental war, when all rents were raised to the utmost, varying from an eighth to a fifth, never amounting to more than a fifth, for that was the calculated value of the reversionary interest, to accept surrenders and grant new leases. This custom, which he acknowledged to have been a departure from the spirit of the Act, was however rendered legal by the 35th of George 3rd, which Act, after declaring valid all existing contracts, expressly empowered the Bishop to accept surrenders and grant new leases; thus the income of the Bishops at present by law consisted not only of the rents of the Church lands, which were nominal, but of the renewal fines, which were considerable; and the tenant was by law enabled, by the regular payment of his renewal fine, which would not amount to more than a fifth of his interest, to maintain his original term of twenty-one years undiminished. He felt he was justified in terming this tenure a perpetuity, which had been sanctioned by the usage of 200 years—a tenure both landlord and tenant were bound by the most powerful of all human motives, personal interest, to maintain; and so powerfully had that interest acted on both, that in the space of two centuries, but one or two instances could be given of those leases having been suffered to expire; and, on examination, it would be found to have arisen either from the mental imbecility or great irregularity of the tenant, in permitting several years of his tenure to pass over without renewal. He challenged them to produce one solitary instance of a Bishop running his life against the tenant, having first refused one-fifth of the beneficial interest as renewal fine. That that circumstance rendered it almost imperative on the Bishop to renew, could not be disputed. Three-fourths of his income depended upon it. His rent, which was but the original sum reserved in the days of Charles 1st. barely amounted to a fourth—the remaining three-fourths of his income were made up by renewal fines. Baron Foster, in his evidence in 1825, estimated the incomes of the Irish Prelates at 120,000*l.* a-year; a more accurate inquiry showed it to be 130,000*l.*, 100,000*l.* of which consisted of renewal fines. Would the nation, for the purpose of evicting the tenants of the Church lands, take on itself the payment of 100,000*l.* annually for the next twenty-one years, or would the Irish Episcopal Bench consent to surrender so much of their income, unless one or the other was done. This tenure, then, must, he contended, be deemed perpetual. That it was the interest of the tenant to maintain it, he was ready to admit. Their having done so for 200 years was a sufficient proof—men would not act for so long a period in opposition to their interests. Even now they were willing to put the renewal fine, which at present was voluntary, from the payment of which they were exempt for the next twenty-one years, as an immediate and permanent charge on the land, for the non-payment of which they would be liable to the eviction of their interests, as the price of the name of perpetuity; but they were not willing to purchase it as demanded—first, by a payment of a fifth of their beneficial interest for twenty-one years, amounting to about four millions; secondly, by surrendering the option of commanding five years' purchase of their beneficial interest from the Bishop, at the eve of the expiration of their leases (between two and three millions), which had not even been alluded to by the noble Lord, though he must have been fully aware of it, as it was distinctly mentioned in the evidence of Mr. Foster; thirdly, by contributing to this proposed perpetuity fund, this tenure had always been considered in Ireland as perpetual. Mansion-houses had been built—whole streets had been erected—family settlements had been entered into on the faith of it—and even in the Tithe Report the Committee were compelled to acknowledge that the tenant had, in part, a permanent interest in the land. On what data the noble Lord had assumed the present value of those houses to be but twelve and a-half years' purchase, or by what process of reasoning he had brought the conviction to his mind, that twenty years would be a fair estimate of their future value, he was unable to discover. In the evidence in the Report, to which he had alluded, those leases had been, by some, compared to leases of lives, renewable for ever, which brought sixteen or seventeen years' purchase; and in the various communications he had received from different individuals in Ireland, they universally agreed in the present interest being worth fourteen years' purchase. He supposed the evidence of Mr. Mahony must be depended on to press the statement of the noble Lord:—that Gentleman stated he had known leases of this description disposed of, and bring but twelve years' purchase; but this ought not to be taken as the criterion of their value, for a little further on the same Gentleman stated he had, since 1815, frequently purchased fee simple under seventeen years' purchase. Land in Ireland was brought into the market on account of the distress of its owner—it was brought there to be sold, and sold it must be, bring what price it would— that price depended therefore not on its intrinsic value, but on the number and the wealth of the competitors that might be seeking for it; nor should it be forgotten, that since the evidence was given, the value of these leases had been considerably enhanced by that provision in the Reform Bill, which enabled leaseholders to register. Hitherto the great objection to this kind of property had been, that it could not be made available for political purposes—that objection no longer existed, and he was confident, that fourteen years was far from being an exaggerated value. His hon. friend, the member for Mayo, had informed him a few days since, of a lease of this description being disposed of in his county, and bringing seventeen years' purchase; twenty years was generally considered to be—and was in the tithe report, expressly stated to be—and from Returns in the Master's Office, distinctly shown to be—the value of fee-simple in Ireland. The noble Lord must long since have discovered his error, in stamping the same value on his proposed tenure as on a lease for ever, subject to a heavy chiefry, to all the casualties of ejectment, and the irregularities of the tenant. Could that, with justice, be put on a level with an estate in fee? He himself had known several estates, subject to small chiefry, fall by ejectment, into the possession of the owner in fee. The noble Lord would not venture to affirm that these estates were equal in value to those in fee, or that the latter would not command a higher rate of purchase in the market, by at least three years. In the reports to which he had alluded, the extreme value of these fee-grants was stated to be seventeen-years and a half's purchase; but it was proposed to dispose of four-fifths, one-fifth being laid on the land as annuity; if that were deducted, but fourteen years remained—the exact value of the tenant's present interest. What, then, would remain to be purchased; or under what pretence were the tenants of the Church lands to be called on to contribute to this perpetuity fund? The first demand for the payment of renewal fine was sufficient, and ought to be considered as a purchase of the perpetuity; and if that renewal fine amounted actually to one-fifth of the tenant's beneficial interest, it was more than should be demanded; the tenure was worth fourteen years' purchase; one-fifth of the beneficial interest for twenty-one years was four years' purchase of the entire, and six were demanded towards the perpetuity fund; making altogether, twenty-four years' purchase, independent of their proposed leases to the tenants, of one year and a half, for property which, if brought into the market one hour after the purchase was concluded, would not fetch more than seventeen years and a-half. Could an arrangement, such as this, be termed beneficial? Out of the numerous documents in his possession, he would trouble the House with but two;—the opinion of an eminent notary-public, Mr. Page, concluding the statement he had made on an extract from the evidence of Mr. Leslie Foster in 1825. The questions put to Mr. Page were—first, "What is the value of the reversion at the expiration of a lease of twenty-one years, at present producing an annual income of 500*l*., such reversion to be conveyed by a fee grant subject to a perpetual rent of 100*l*. per annum? Answer, 1200*l*. Second. What is the present value of 100*l*. annually, payable by annual instalments for twenty-one years? Answer 1250*l*. proving, that when the renewal fine was an actual fifth, it would amount to one year and a half purchase more than should be demanded. Mr. Foster's evidence was this "The maximum a Bishop will obtain 'is one-fifth of beneficial value; it is com- 'puted that, practically, the present value 'of one year, to be added at the expiration 'of twenty years, is one-fifth of what that 'twenty years is expected to produce; 'some Bishops are contented with a 'seventh—some with a sixth; but a-fifth is 'the maximum which can be obtained;

'and the tenant who would give more 'than that, would make a losing bargain; 'if he was tenant to a Bishop, he would 'rather let his lease expire than give him 'so much; ten year's purchase is de'manded for four-fifths of a fee-farm 'grant, when the absolute reversion of the 'entire fee simple is worth but seven." The more he considered, the more difficult he found it, to reconcile himself to this new, this monstrous principle, now for the first time attempted to be introduced into legislation. This claim, on the part of the State, for real, or, as in the present instance, imaginary benefit conferred by Acts of Parliament—this fearful precedent for England, which could be made available on every question, and for every purpose—if once admitted, would shake the security of every description of property whether public or private, lay or ecclesiastical. Even now, as before the House, it was a measure of no trifling import; it would affect between a tenth and eleventh of the whole landed property of Ireland—a species of property, which, not having been included in the great forfeitures, hitherto holding out no inducements to the capitalists to purchase, was at present almost exclusively vested in the small resident proprietors. This class—on whom the maintenance of the connexion between the countries must ultimately depend—by whom the whole local business of the country was transacted—in whom were centred all hopes of the future improvement of Ireland,—all these would, by one stroke, be deprived of a fourth of their property, and must eventually, by the Bill, be utterly exterminated. Vainly would they endeavour to struggle against a diminution of their income of forty per cent. It was most desirable for all parties that the question should be settled, that on fair and equitable terms the perpetuity should be obtained. It was desirable for the Bishop,—it would render certain his income, now liable to great variation,—it was desirable for the tenant as it would protect him (and that was all it would do for him) in his future outlay of capital;—but it would be as beneficial to the State, as advantageous to the tenant and the Church. Whole districts, at present unprofitable, would be brought into cultivation; employment would be afforded to the people; tranquillity throughout the country would be maintained. Was it not the interest of the nation, and ought it not to be the policy of the Government, to promote, in place of retarding, so desirable an end? These lands were, by the concurrent testimony of every individual who was examined, declared remarkable for their unimproved and neglected state. Want of employment had long been the bane of Ireland, the fertile source of disturbances and discontent of her peasantry. The settlement of this question was an opportunity long wished for, which promised to call into action employment for thousands of her agricultural population; but, as usual, the cup when within reach was to be dashed from their lips. Was it not mockery on the part of his Majesty's Government to declare that they would, by giving a permanent interest, create in the heart of the landlord the desire of improvement; while, at the same time, they were depriving him of the means of carrying it into effect? They confessed, they acknowledged, the neglected state of these lands, but their fiat was about to go forth that, as they hitherto had been, so they should remain, neither affording employment to the people nor wealth to the nation. The noble Lord, on originally introducing this measure, made use of the expression, "want of capital in Ireland is an evil Government cannot remedy." It was an evil, however, they ought not, as they were at present about to do, to increase. He had heard this expression fall from the noble Lord with feelings of deep dissatisfaction. It would be unfair, it would be uncandid, to charge him and his Colleagues with the actual want of capital in Ireland; but he would maintain, to remove that want, to remedy that great evil, the source of so much misery and crime, should be among the first thoughts, as it was certainly one of the first duties, of the noble Lord, both as a Minister and as a Legislator. The increase of capital in Ireland would be the best criterion, as it would be the first result of a wise system of measures; the want of it was presumptive evidence of mistaken and unsuccessful legislation; and when the noble Lord declared want of capital in Ireland an evil he could not remedy, he said, in fact, that he despaired of Ireland. He despaired of himself. He would once more object to the proposed alteration of this, as he trusted it would prove, visionary fund. Had it been destined to increase the salaries of the hard-working, but ill-requited class, the unfortunate, the neglected curates, though he would object to its amount, still he would subscribe to its principle. Had it even been proposed to remove a blot from the Protestant Church by compensating and doing away with the holding of pluralities, it would have found some favour in his eyes, but as it was, he protested against it, and conjured the Ministers not to persevere in making it part and parcel of their Bill; and he particularly called on the right hon. Secretary for the Colonies, whose talents no person could hold in higher estimation than he did, nor was there an individual in the House more inclined to give him credit for those kind feelings towards Ireland which, in his eloquent address to the House at the commencement of the Session he assured them he had always felt,—he called upon him, as a practical proof of his friendship, to abandon this obnoxious and oppressive provision. If Government would not adhere to the principle of their Bill, which professed to be for the advantage of the tenant, let them, at least, be just; should the measure, however, be proceeded in he did not fear the result. His confidence in that House must forbid his imagining that they would, in open disregard of the rights of property, in direct violation of justice, in a total abandonment of good feeling, sanction it, or call on Ireland,—wasted, impoverished Ireland,—to furnish a subsidy of 3,000,000*l.* to the State. He would no longer detain the House; he had already trespassed on its patience too long; and he would but assure it, that he deeply felt and gratefully acknowledged the attention with which he had been honoured.

An *Hon. Member* was understood to say, that the measure had his general support, but that he objected to part of it, because that part of it was inconsistent with the main principles of the Bill. The part he objected to was that which sanctioned an alienation of Church property; for, notwithstanding the denial of the right hon. Secretary for the Colonies, there was in the measure a sanction given to the alienation of Church property. Whilst he admitted the power of that House with respect to Church property, he thought that it should be especially applied to Church purposes. One of the purposes to which it ought to be applied, and for which it was originally destined, was education; and few countries more than Ireland required that education should be encouraged. It was the ignorance of the people of that country that gave so much hold to agitation; and no one could read the Report of the Irish Commissioners without being convinced, that the increase of crime in Ireland was owing to the ignorance of the people. Even the hon. member for Dublin would allow, that the crimes of a population were generally proportionate to their ignorance.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, that he was not quite so sure of the ignorance of the people of Ireland. Whether ignorance did or did not prevail there, it was certain that it did to a very large extent elsewhere, and he seldom saw so many proofs of it as he did when he heard hon. Members talk about Ireland. He denied that the crimes of a country were in proportion to the ignorance of its population, and he was supported in his opinion by the authority of a late number of "The Edinburgh Review." He had seen it stated in a statistical calculation published in that journal, that there were more poor children enjoying the blessing of education in Ireland, than in that country so vaunted, and so favoured as to education—Scotland. Besides, if the statistical accounts of crimes in the French departments, drawn up by the desire of the Government of that country, were consulted, the hon. Member who had last spoken would find that the progress of crime did not tally with the ignorance of the departments; for that the proportion of crime to the inhabitants was greater in those departments which were considered the most enlightened. With respect to the present measure, as he had said on a former occasion, it had his approbation; and he would now state why he approved of it no longer, lest he should be accused of inconsistency and of changing his sentiments without a sufficient reason. The fact was, that the noble Lord opposite had practised a delusion on him when he said that the Vestry-cess was to be entirely abolished. The noble Lord might have done so unwittingly, but the noble Lord must still be aware that he (Mr. O'Connell) spoke sincerely when he mentioned that he laboured under a delusion upon this point. The amount of the cess was stated to be between 60,000*l.* or 80,000*l.*; in the newspaper reports he saw it to be 69,000*l.* This was to be done away with; and when the noble Lord stated the yearly value of Bishops' property to be 700,000*l.*, he (Mr. O'Connell) asked the noble Lord whether it was too much to expect that the people of Ireland should be relieved of their burthens at the rate of about ten per cent upon that property? But it had been proved since the noble Lord spoke, that the relief, instead of amounting to 70,000*l.*, would not amount to more than 10,000*l.* This was the reason why he changed his opinion with respect to the measure. He held in his hand some returns of the amount of assessment on several parishes in Dublin, some with exclusively Protestant vestries, and others to which he would refer for the purpose of showing what charges would be abolished by the operation of this measure. The statute of 7 Geo. 4, c. 72, authorized three heads of expenditure. First, expenses relating to the building, rebuilding, repairing, or enlarging churches or chapels; secondly, the providing things necessary for the celebration of divine service therein, as authorized by letters canonical, or canon law; and thirdly, the providing a salary for the maintenance of any parish clerk or sexton. These were the heads of expenditure authorized by the Act. Now, the assessment dated the 11th of June, 1830, made on the parish of St. Ann's, Dublin, the Vestry being exclusively Protestant, contained the following items:

	£.	s.	d.
To Bread and wine for Communion	15	0	0
Parish clerk	58	0	0
Sexton	32	18	4
Ditto ringing for Morning Service	9	5	0
Organist	53	0	0
Organ-blower . . .	9	5	0
Organ-tuner	9	5	0
Ground-rent of church . .	15	0	0
Insurance on church . .	15	0	0

Then there was a charge for the salary of a curate, for performing morning service, 150*l.* And then came

	£.	s.	d.
Reverend George Blacker (another)	150	0	0
Vestry clerk, one year's salary .	23	0	0
Assistance to sexton . . .	23	0	0
Beadle	24	0	0
Gate-keeper	32	0	0
Vestry maid	19	0	0
Engine keeper's salary . .	19	0	0
Paying engines attending fires in the parish	17	0	0
Providing for deserted children .	17	0	0
Donations to the poor . .	21	0	0
Taking care of churchyard . .	6	0	0
————	45	0	0

Now St. Peter's was not exclusively Protestant, and let the House see the items of expenditure in St. Peter's. There were,

	£.	s.	d.
Taking care of church	5	5	0
Organist	65	0	0
Organ bellows-blower . . .	6	16	0
Organ-tuner	6	16	0
Beadle	42	0	0
Vestry clerk	80	0	0

Now all the expensive items he had mentioned would still remain, though it had been said that the cess was virtually abolished. The cess, so far as it regarded the repairs of churches, was done away with, but it would still be levied for all other purposes. The present measure would, by allowing assessments at any time of the year, only double that vexatious tax. When he had expressed his approval of the Bill, he had done so because he believed it would remove this most vexatious imposition; but, on examining the measure, he had found, that it neither repealed the act of Geo. 2, nor the 7th Geo. 4, nor any of those Acts by which this cess was levied; and, therefore, he retracted his opinion. He must state, that the people of Ireland cared little for the removal of ten of the Bishops, but only sought to escape the annoying payments which were thus levied upon them. The only feature of the Bill that he was able to approve of was, that it instituted a control by Parliament over Church property, and that, once admitted, it might lead to ulterior and highly important consequences. He complained that the law as it stood was most unjust, for if an appeal were made by a Catholic to the Court of King's Bench against the Vestry-cess, and the appeal were unsuccessful in form or substance, he was fined in triple costs, and if he were successful, he had to pay the costs of both sides. The Bill did not abolish tithes, nor lessen the burthens of the people of Ireland. With reference to the livings to which the present Fellows of Trinity College would be entitled to succeed, he hoped the Bill would not prejudice the interests of those Gentlemen therein, as having actually toiled in expectation of the vacancies, they might be said to have a vested right in them.

Lord *Althorp* said, that the hon. and learned member for Dublin had contended, that the Vestry-cess in Ireland would not be abolished by the Bill introduced by the Government. He (Lord A.) could only say, that the intention was to abolish it, and that if the hon. and learned Member could point out an instance in which that was not done, he could assure him the Government would make such alteration in the clause as would have the effect of abolishing it. Since the hon. and learned Gentleman had spoken, however, he (Lord Althorp) had been assured by an hon. and learned Gentleman near him, that the clause, as it at present stood, would have the effect of abolishing all those charges. The intention was, to benefit the people of Ireland by relieving them of the Vestry-cess; and if the clause which was to confer that benefit were still found to be defective, they were willing to make the required Amendment. The hon. and learned member for Dublin then complained that the Bill did not go so far as he wished. He (Lord A.) had no doubt that it did not go so far as the inclination of the hon. and learned Member would wish; and he would say more, it was never intended that it should go so far. The learned Gentleman said further, that it contained many clauses which were of no consequence to a large majority of the people of Ireland. It was true, as argued by the hon. and learned Member, that it was a matter of indifference to the Catholics of Ireland how the revenues of the Church were distributed among the clergy; but the learned Gentleman should recollect that this was a Bill intended for the Reform of the Protestant Church, and that it was therefore their business to remove the abuses of the Protestant Church, but they were not obliged to go to the Catholics for their advice how that Church would be best arranged. He would now beg to say a few words in answer to the speech of the hon. member for Roscommon (Mr. French). When that hon. Gentleman asserted that this Bill would do an injury to the tenants of the Church, he could assure the hon. Member, that it was not intended to do them an injury; but, on the contrary, that it was intended to do them a benefit. The hon. Member had said, that the leases held by those tenants were equal to a perpetuity. Now he (Lord Althorp) could assure the House, that at present there were forty-five Bishops' leases, of which only ten years remained, and he would ask if those leases could be considered equal to a perpetuity? As far as he (Lord Althorp) could understand the tenor of the hon. Member's argument, he appeared to contend that the continued renewal of a lease was more valuable than a perpetuity by half a year's purchase. He would now say a few words with regard to the observations of the hon. and learned member for the University of Dublin. That hon. and learned Member proposed, that instead of the present plan of getting rid of Vestry-cess, and placing the expense of maintaining the Irish Church on Irish Protestants, a tax of a penny an acre should be imposed; but this proposal was objectionable on the same ground as the Vestry-cess, because it threw the expenses of the Church on other than churchmen, who ought to bear them. The hon. and learned Gentleman assumed, that the palaces vacated by Protestant Bishops would be occupied by members of the Catholic hierarchy, a circumstance upon which he dwelt with expressions of great horror and regret; but he saw no reason for supposing the matter to be at all likely, and therefore thought the learned Gentleman might spare his lamentations. The hon. and learned Gentleman said, that the revenues of the suppressed bishoprics should be left with the Bishops who were retained. If the hon. and learned Member thought the revenues of the bishoprics which remained too small, he (Lord Althorp) could understand why the revenues of two Bishops should be given to one; but as that was not alleged, he could not see the advantage of that arrangement; and he thought it would be much better to apply those revenues to the general purposes of the Church of Ireland. The hon. and learned Member objected also to the abolition of the Board of First Fruits, and to the manner in which the first fruits were to be administered; and that it was degrading to the Church that the Board of Commissioners who were to have the administration of them should be composed partly of ecclesiastics and partly of laymen. Now, he thought it of great importance that those employed in that arduous and important duty should be persons of activity and industry; and that such a duty should not be intrusted to those persons alone who could not be called upon to attend, but might do so or not, as they thought proper. When they came to that clause, he would be ready to prove that there was nothing in it deserving of the censure which had been lavished upon it by the hon. and learned Gentleman. He had no intention of taking part in the discussion that evening; and his only reason for rising was, because he had considered the observations made as necessary to be answered.

Mr. *Goulburn* was not opposed to the adoption of useful and necessary reforms in the Church Establishment; on the contrary, as one who venerated that Establishment, he desired to see it rendered as complete as possible; but he must resist the present Bill, which was calculated to retard the growth of the Protestant faith in Ireland, but did nothing towards the actual reform of abuses, or the promotion of the efficiency of the Church as an instrument for the extension of true religion. There was nothing in the Bill to enforce the residence of the clergy—no provision for the separation of large unions of parishes—in short, the measure did not tend to render the Church more efficient. Its grand feature was, that it abolished ten bishoprics, of which he would speak presently. He did not object to the removal of the Vestry-cess from the population at large, but he thought that, in professing to remove a grievance, the noble Lord left behind abundant grounds for dissatisfaction and agitation. There were two cesses raised in every parish in Ireland—the one by an exclusively Protestant vestry, the other by a mixed vestry of Protestants and Catholics. The objects of the first-named cess were limited by Act of Parliament to repairs of the Church and the performance of worship therein, but the general vestry had to deal with subjects no less inflammatory. Curates' salaries had been provided for in general vestries, but it was otherwise enacted by the present Bill. However, abundant subjects of dispute and irritation remained. The expenses of organists, singing, and all matters connected with the churchyard, were provided for in general vestries. Here was matter for agitation which the Bill had not removed. The Bill imposed an oppressive and iniquitous tax on one class of the community without attaining its avowed object. He did not wish the noble Lord to impose another tax on the clergy for the accomplishment of the objects at which he had glanced, but he said that when the noble Lord was getting rid of the Vestry-cess, he would have done better to have got rid of it altogether; and unless that were done, they would render the life of the Protestant clergy hardly safe. But the great objection which he had to the Bill was the manner in which it affected the interests of the Protestant Bishops, while it restricted the extension of the Protestant religion throughout Ireland. If this Bill should be carried, it would prove the greatest calamity which could be inflicted on the country. The noble Lord intended by this measure to abolish no less than ten out of the twenty-two Bishops in Ireland; and he would leave a number which was not sufficient to perform the duties of the Church. He would not question the right of the Crown to consolidate the bishoprics, but he would say that, if such a reduction as that proposed were carried into effect, the number of bishoprics would be restricted to a number which would fail to render them able to discharge those numerous duties which would devolve upon them. With respect to the number of Bishops, he could not suppose that all of them could always be ready to fulfil their functions, when he called to mind the common accidents of nature, the infirmities of age, or those many causes which must always tend to reduce the actual number of the persons appointed to these situations. In every establishment there would be men promoted to high stations who, from a variety of circumstances, might not be calculated to advance the dignity of the Establishment. They could not therefore calculate always upon having the aid of twelve Bishops to conduct the ecclesiastical affairs of the Church in Ireland; and by the Bill, it followed, that of that number four would be required to perform their parliamentary duties, while four would be expected to remain in Dublin for the superintendence of spiritual affairs. Therefore, for five or six months of the year, no more than four Bishops could be expected to be engaged in the discharge of the episcopal duties. But supposing that all these Bishops were in the full vigour of youth, their number would be inadequate to the discharge of the duties of their situations. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of the English bishoprics, and had particularly referred to the bishopric of Chester, as containing a great number of benefices; but he thought that, if a Reform were to be made in the English Church Establishment, that Reform should be to increase the number of bishoprics. He did not think it necessary to dwell at any length upon the great advantage which Ireland derived from the residence of the Bishops, who were resident gentry of the best description, and gave employment to the people. He had himself been in Ireland in the year 1822, when the country was visited by the double calamity of famine and of a frightful pestilence which raged through Ireland. He knew well what had been the exertions of those Bishops on that occasion, whose situations it was intended to abolish, and he witnessed more particularly the conduct of a Bishop in Galway. He had beheld with delight the efforts which had been made by the Archbishop of Tuam, not only in the capacity of a Protestant Bishop, but also in his character as a Protestant Gentleman. Only last year he had seen a Bishop, who, while Gentlemen on every side fled from their abodes in alarm, had given up his intention of sailing for England, and had returned to his residence for the purpose of administering comfort to the poor people in his diocese. It was the fashion to say that all preferment was given to the relations of the nobility, but this he denied in respect to the bishoprics. The Bishops rose to their distinctions from their superior talent and accomplishments to their contemporaries. He thought that in every point of view, whether in respect to the necessary ecclesiastical superintendence of the Bishops, or the benefit arising to the country from the residence of the Bishops in their dioceses (in which latter case he had only quoted one instance, though he knew many similar cases), the proposed reduction was carried beyond what could be beneficial to the country. The fact was, that this Bill appointed a commission to take care that religious duties should not be performed in Ireland; if service had not been performed for a certain time in a parish, the commissioners had power to prevent it ever being performed again. Now, in his opinion, they ought to do directly the contrary of that, and of a parish so long deserted, peculiar care should be taken of the religious culture. The diminishing the power of the Church of Ireland, to effect the spread of Protestantism in that country, which would follow from this measure, would not be compensated for, he feared, by the exertions of the voluntarily paid ministers of Dissenting congregations, judging from the manner in which such exertions were treated by his Majesty's Government. It was but very recently that two Dissenting ministers in Ireland, who endeavoured to address the people there, with a view to disseminate amongst them the truths of the Protestant religion, drew down upon their heads the reprobation of the Government for their conduct. Instead of suspending the appointment of a minister in parishes where, through the negligence of former ministers, duty had not been performed for some years, they should appropriate the revenues which they would derive from the Bishops' lands to the filling up of all vacant livings, and thus endeavour to promote the spread of Protestantism in that country. He was firmly convinced that the happiness and prosperity of Ireland mainly depended upon the spread of the true reformed Protestant faith in that country, and he was convinced that if its blessings were more widely disseminated there, instead of crimes and outrages, peace, virtue, and good-will, the never-failing effects, as experience had shown, of the efforts of Protestant ministers to establish the true faith, would universally prevail. For his part, he did not see what advantages the people of Ireland would obtain by the passing of this Bill. He did not believe that, in a pecuniary point of view, the lower orders of the Irish people would derive any benefit from it, because an increase in the rents would no doubt take place, so as more than to make up for the burden, if any, from which this measure went to relieve them. In fact, instead of seeing in this measure any tendency to diminish the evils of Ireland, he was of opinion that several of the clauses of it would go greatly to aggravate them. This measure went to lessen the Bishops in Ireland, and to diminish the number of the clergy there, while it went to transfer their property to the hands of lay commissioners, who would have no fellow-feeling with the people. If they passed this measure they would condemn many parts of Ireland to the misfortune of never seeing a Protestant Bishop, and of never being solaced and instructed in the true religion by a Protestant pastor.

Mr. *Hume* said, that he should have been extremely glad to have heard the speech just made by the right hon. Gentleman delivered by him when he sat on the other side of the House, and he should have been equally glad to have heard the right hon. Gentleman suggest those Reforms which he now suggested, and admitted to be necessary, at a time that he had the power of carrying them into effect. But far other was the game of the right hon. Gentleman when he sat on the Treasury benches. He recollected the day when the right hon. Gentleman had the power of carrying these Reforms into effect, and when he would not do so; he recollected the day when the attention of the right hon. Gentleman was called—but was called in vain—to the non-residence of clergymen, and to the other crying abuses that existed in the Church Establishment of Ireland. All those abuses seemed then to be forgotten by the right hon. Gentleman, and he had only recovered his sight so as to perceive the misgovernment and mismanagement of the Irish Church, at the same time that he had been removed from his seat upon the opposite benches. He would do the right hon. Gentleman the justice to say that he had always expressed an anxious desire that clergymen should be resident, but what was the use of expressing such an opinion if the right hon. Gentleman did not use the means for carrying it into effect? [Mr. *Goulburn:* I did use them; I brought in a Bill for the purpose]. He was told by the right hon. Gentleman that he brought in a Bill for the purpose, but why had not that Bill produced the desired effect, after having been so many years in operation? The right hon. Gentleman told them that he considered the support and maintenance of the Protestant Established Church in Ireland as the only means of securing the peace of that country, and yet the right hon. Gentleman had hitherto done nothing for the spread of Protestantism in Ireland but by voting money for other purposes. What was the remedy which he now proposed? After Protestantism had had a trial of a century and upwards in Ireland, and had failed in making progress there, the right hon. Gentleman proposed that churches should be built, and that the number of Protestant clergymen should be increased, evidently for the purpose of forcing Protestantism down the throats of the people of that country. He (Mr. Hume) was anxious to state to the House what he believed to be the real truth—namely, that they never should have peace in Ireland until the Protestant Establishment there was put down [*No, no*]. The hon. member for Berkshire did not seem to agree in that opinion; he begged the hon. Member's pardon, the hon. member for Yorkshire (Mr. Duncombe) did not appear, judging from his vociferous "No," to coincide in that sentiment. The hon. Member did not seem to agree with him as to the expediency of putting an end to the Protestant Establishment in Ireland. Now, he would assert, and re-assert, that that was the only and the true way of pacifying Ireland [*No, no*]. The hon. Members about him might cry "No, no" to that statement, but just let them try the matter by the test of experience. What did the hon. and learned member for the city of Dublin tell them a short time ago? That they had been for a century and a half trying by every means in their power to spread Protestantism in Ireland; but that, instead of succeeding, the Protestant Church there had fallen off day by day, and instead of increasing the number of Protestants, had been gradually on the decrease, so much so, that in many parishes in Ireland there was not a single Protestant to be found. Would not a trial of a century and upwards satisfy them of the fruitlessness of the effort, and were they to commence a Quixotic crusade of another century in seeking such an unattainable end? He trusted that the House would have the good sense to scout such ridiculous schemes. What he wished, on this occasion, to impress upon the noble Lord and the right hon. Secretary opposite was, that it would be better for them to take a more decided course on this subject. From what had happened that night, they must see that this measure would not give satisfaction either to the Catholics or to the high Protestants; and he would tell them, further, that this measure would give satisfaction to nobody. He did not blame this measure on the same account that those gentlemen around him who now cried "Hear, hear," did. He did not blame it because it cut down ten Bishops; no, but he blamed it because it did not cut down twenty-two Bishops in Ireland. He thought that one Bishop ought to answer all the purposes for which Bishops were really wanted in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman opposite had stated to them instances of Bishops presiding over from thirty-five to sixty benefices, and he had referred to the excellent example of the Bishop of Chester, who had in his diocess no less than 1,200 benefices. Now, there were only 1,286 livings in Ireland altogether, and therefore it would be only with the slight addition of some sixty or eighty benefices, to make one Bishop, as the Bishop of Chester did in this country, preside over them, and attend to the affairs of a church of 600,000 or 700,000 persons, for that, he believed, comprised the whole number of the Protestants of the Established Church in Ireland. He thought that one Bishop would be amply sufficient to do that duty. The Act of Union did not contemplate the necessity of having more than four Bishops in Ireland, as it called only that number to Parliament; and on a former occasion, when he (Mr. Hume) was more liberal towards the Church, he had proposed that four Bishops should be retained in Ireland. He now, however, thought that one would be sufficient. They should consider for what purposes the Protestant Church was established in Ireland. It was not for the purpose of maintaining a parcel of idle clergymen—it was not for the purpose of producing eternal bickerings and contests amongst the people—it was for the purpose of promoting religion good-will, and peace. Did it do so? Had it not, on the contrary, tended to promote anything but such desirable results? He would therefore say, that the Church establishment of Ireland had been the bane of that unfortunate country; that all the abominations in the shape of countless abuses connected with it had produced results the very reverse of those for effecting which a Church should be established; and he now called upon them to give an honest verdict, and put down the nuisance. The hon. and learned member for the University of Dublin had told them, forsooth, that Church property was not public property. Why, that doctrine was now so completely exploded that even some of the Bishops themselves had given up the point. There was no doubt that it was public property, to be dealt with as Parliament might think fit. [" *No, no!*"] He would only say to those hon. Members about him who cried "No," that they differed from several of the Bishops, who had acknowledged that principle. He would repeat, that the property of the Church was public property, for all purposes to which Parliament might wish to appropriate it. The hon. and learned member for the Dublin University talked of the monster that was carrying every thing before it. He knew no monster existing save public opinion. It was to nothing else the hon. and learned Member had alluded; his observations could apply to nothing else. Would any man say, that in England the Church of Ireland was not considered as a sinecure church. [" *No, no!*"] Hon. Gentlemen near him said " No " to that, but it was not to them that he appealed,—he appealed to the people. Let them take ninety-nine out of every 100 of the people of England and Scotland, and they would find that they would say that the Church of Ireland was a sinecure church, and that it produced enormous evils, which ought to be redressed. In fact, the only question was, how, without shaking the institutions of the country, the nuisance, as it existed, could be abated? As this measure would neither satisfy the Catholics nor the high church party, his Majesty's Ministers should seek to satisfy the people. There was too much good sense in the country to run wrong for any length of time. Let them see the day—they never would see it—when public opinion would change to the side of those hon. Gentlemen who now so loudly cheered him, and then he would admit, but not till then, that those hon. Gentlemen were right. Public opinion had set in strongly against the maintenance of abuses in church establishments, and let the conflict be only continued for some time longer, and they would bring the English Church into the same discredit and disrepute that the Irish Church at present monopolized to itself. The fault he had to find with this measure was, that his Majesty's Ministers did not go far enough to meet the wishes of the country. He would not object to it, however. He would be glad to take it now, hoping that it would lead to those results to which he looked forward hereafter. He must say that the greatest enemy to the Established Church in the country, without knowing it, was the hon. and learned member for the University of Dublin, who altogether denied the necessity of Reform and the existence of the most notorious abuses. They were the real friends of the Establishment who endeavoured in some measure to remedy its monstrous abuses. In no parish in Ireland should a Protestant clergyman be left who had no duties to perform and no flock to attend to. He trusted that ere long the noble Lord opposite, should he retain the situation he now occupied, would see the necessity of extending the Reform in the Irish Church. The doing so would be the best mode of promoting the real interests of that establishment. It was plain that, unless the Catholics were relieved from every contribution for the support of the Protestant Church in Ireland, there never would be peace in that country. He believed it was the intention of the noble Lord to relieve them by this measure; and if such was his intention, nothing would more tend to produce peace and satisfaction in Ireland. He would have the Church lands in Ireland sold out and out. That was the way to promote the prosperity of Ireland. Let the funds arising from their sale be applied as Parliament should think fit. They might depend upon it that the establishment of a set of Commissioners, with this and that power, would never attain the result that the sale of the Church lands, as he recommended, would produce towards establishing the prosperity of Ireland. He should support this Reform; he would go as far as the noble Lord, and he wished he had gone further, and if the noble Lord would not go further, he hoped somebody else would.

Mr. *Granville Harcourt Vernon* said, no man was less disposed than he was to decry public opinion. The laugh was directed rather against the monstrous opinion of the member for Middlesex than against public opinion. He supported this Bill under many painful impressions arising from his connexion with an individual dignitary of the Church, from his official situation, and from other considerations. He supported this Bill, because he was satisfied that it would render the Established Church of Ireland more stable, more effective, and more respected. As the state of the Church in Ireland did not seem to suit with public opinion in that country, the natural conclusion was, that there must be something in it which required revision and correction. The member for Middlesex seemed to him to aim at nothing less than the total destruction of that Church. This sentiment was natural enough in a North Britain; but he confessed, that he entertained strong predilections in favour of that Church and its hierarchy. He considered the institution of Church dignitaries as of the greatest benefit to society; and on general principles he contended that the current of morality must descend from the higher classes to the lower. The advantage of prelacy was this, that by such an institution they had a class of men who by their education and station in society might mix with the upper classes, communicate religious instruction to them, while, at the same time, they mixed with them in equal and amicable intercourse, being separated from them only by the absence of the follies and vices incident to wealth. He did not think, however, that the efficiency of the Church depended on the number of its dignitaries. The number, if greater than necessity required, seemed rather a source of injury by exciting complaint than of increased benefit. The member for the University of Dublin spoke of the number of acres each Prelate in Ireland had to attend to besides his other duties. The proper business of a Bishop was not to measure acres, but to devote himself to the spiritual concerns of the people. So far as he comprehended the Bill under consideration, he did not think the proposed union of bishoprics in Ireland would throw upon the Prelates any additional duties which they would not be adequate to discharge. He had been in the habit of accompanying his relative (the Archbishop of York) for many years in the discharge of his duties through a very extensive diocese, and he believed there was no ground for saying that these duties were not adequately discharged. In the diocese of Chester there were 1,200 parishes, and in that of York 1,000, with a population of 3,000,000. He heard of no complaints made that the duties of the bishop were inadequately performed in either diocese. These duties were some of them very heavy, such as the consecration of churches and confirmations. In large towns it was not uncommon to see as many as 5,000 children confirmed at one time. There were, however, various other duties, the weight of which depended on the number of parishes, the number of communications to be attended to, and the amount of the population. It would not appear that, in any point of view, the proposed unions in Ireland would impose more labour than a single Prelate might be capable of performing. He did not think it would be proper to apply the funds to any other but ecclesiastical purposes, nor was it proposed by this Bill to do so. The only thing contemplated was a different mode of application, and the great object to be effected was the extension of morality and religion. He should be content with the Bill if the words "ecclesiastical purposes" were introduced, and he would give his support to any Amendment which went to confine the application of the revenues of the Church to those purposes.

Mr. *Wynn* contended, that the adoption of the measure would be tantamount to a declaration that it was no longer the wish of Parliament to encourage and maintain the Protestant religion in Ireland. He must, in the first place, say, that he most positively objected to the principle of interfering with existing interests, and laying a tax upon individuals now possessed of benefices, for the relief of the landlords in Ireland. At present every proprietor in Ireland was subject to certain charges; but by transferring those charges to the Protestant clergy, every landlord would be enabled to raise his rents. At what a time, too, was this done? It was only last year that his Majesty's Ministers gave a deplorable, but correct, account of the extreme distress of the Protestant clergy in Ireland, and induced the House to grant them relief. He did not understand that tithes were better paid now, than they were then, and yet there was now no proposal for relief, but a proposal to tax their future incomes, although for the last two years and a half hardly any thing had been paid to them. It had been stated, that this Bill was to be accompanied by an enactment to ensure the better payment of tithes; but that ought already to have been brought forward. Let him ask, whether they did not interfere with existing interests in an unfair way? Did they not act with the greatest injustice to all who held the advowsons of livings as private property? Perhaps for the sake of the Church they might be allowed to deal with ecclesiastical livings; but on what pretence could the Legislature interfere with the property in advowsons—a property much older than the Reformation, and allowed by the law of England to be bought and sold from the earliest periods? Was it fair to individuals who, under the sanction of the law, had paid large sums either for the next presentation to, or the perpetual advowsons of livings that the House should impose a tax of 15*l.* per cent upon their property? The injustice was equally great in the case of individuals who inherited advowsons; but where the advowsons had been purchased, it was more severely felt. He hoped that when the details of the Bill were discussed, there would be no objection to alter the clause which placed the tax upon incomes of 200*l.* a-year. That sum was not sufficient for a clergyman: it was not double the sum given by gentlemen to their servants. These were details; but look to the injustice of the principle. The whole of this property was in the Church, with unlimited power over it; but the Legislature passed a restrictive Bill limiting its power for the benefit of the Church. Now it was proposed to take advantage of that restriction, and seize the gain which would arise from removing it. That appeared to him complete spoliation, which tended to the destruction of all property. With respect to the union of different bishoprics, he would not determine whether the power of Parliament, or even of the Crown alone extended so far or not; but the impression which the union of these bishoprics would create in Ireland was, that the Protestants were deserted—an impression which would prove most hostile to the Protestant religion. Again, would not the towns where these Bishops constantly reside greatly suffer by the change? Without imputing any peculiar merits to the Bishops, it might be said, that the incomes they possessed were spent more to the advantage of the neighbourhood in which they resided, than they would be if they were in the hands of any other person. It was for the interest of religion that the number of Bishops should be increased in England, instead of being diminished in Ireland. The hon. member, who had just sat down said, that he never heard of a complaint of the administration of the diocese of York; but several years ago, the prelate who held that see, had lamented to him the impossibility of discharging the duty attached to it satisfactorily, on account of its extent, and the great number of clergy resident in it. The hon. Gentleman also stated, that the weight of a Bishop's duty might be calculated by the number of inhabitants in his diocese, but the distance a Bishop had to travel was a very important element in the calculation of the amount of his labour. At any rate no changes of this kind ought to be made without having full statistical particulars respecting the different bishoprics laid upon the Table. The only part of the Bill of which he approved was that which related to enforcing residence. At the same time he doubted whether it went further than the Bill brought in by his right hon. friend (Mr. Goulburn) of whose labours the hon. member for Middlesex seemed profoundly ignorant. His right hon. friend did not confine himself, as stated by the hon. member for Middlesex, to declaring a simple opinion; but, when Secretary to the Lord-lieutenant of Ireland, introduced measures to enforce that opinion. Whatever additional provisions could be introduced should have his support. Returning to the present Bill his chief objections to it were two; the first was, the extent of the reduction of bishoprics. He should not have objected to a smaller reduction, by adding a small bishopric to another; but when there were dioceses of ninety or 100 parishes, it was too great an addition of duty to the other Bishops. The other objection was against applying the property of the Church to objects not ecclesiastical.

Sir *Robert Bateson* was not opposed to a real practical Reform of the Church—less so, perhaps, than those who proposed a delusion under the name of Reform. He was quite ready to support any proposition which should have for its object the prevention of pluralities, the equalization —not the destruction of bishoprics—and the putting an end to the practice of translation. The present proposition must lead to the destruction of the Protestant Church in Ireland. He objected to the lay Commissioners in the Board, and thought the Board ought to be wholly episcopal. As to doing away the Church cess, he should be happy to concur in any measure by which the objections to the existing system might be removed. He objected to laying a tax on so low a rate of clerical incomes as 200*l.* a-year. In his opinion, the plan proposed, so far from tending to the advancement of the religion which he professed, would lead to its utter overthrow. The tax, too, ought to be imposed on the lay impropriators equally with clergymen; nay, they ought to bear a greater share, for they rendered no service in return. The plan proposed by Ministers had, in his opinion, alienated from them the confidence of the Protestants of Ireland.

Mr. *Andrew Johnston* said, that though a Church Reformer, and anxious for the removal of abuses, he could not assent to this Bill. He regretted much the doctrines which were daily advanced in favour of the separation of Church and State; but as far as the people of Scotland were concerned, he denied that any such sentiment was generally entertained by them. The abolition of Vestry cess appeared to him highly objectionable; the Vestry cess he looked upon as a burthen on the land; and if the Vestry cess were to cease, it would only add so much to the estates of the landed proprietors. He was a Presbyterian; and it might, therefore, be thought strange that he should, as he did, object to the reduction of the number of Bishops in Ireland. In his opinion they ought to be increased. He considered that Ireland was a fair field for Episcopal Bishops to labour in; and he thought their number might be increased and their salaries diminished without injuring the principles of the Bill. He objected to various details of the Bill, particularly to the constitution of the Board of Commissioners, which would be completely under the control of the Government, and, on the whole, he regarded it as a dark and ominous measure.

Mr. *Shaw* wished to explain a misapprehension of the right hon. Secretary for the Colonies on the last night this subject was discussed. He was represented by that right hon. Gentleman as having stated, that if this Bill had been brought forward by his friends on that side of the House, he would have supported it; but having been brought forward by the other side, he should oppose it. The right hon. Gentleman was wholly mistaken. With regard to another statement of the right hon. Gentleman, that the Primate of Ireland had suggested the reduction of the number of Bishoprics, he begged, on the part of the Prelate, to deny, that such was the case, and he thought it would be prudent of the right hon. Secretary to be a little more cautious, for these assertions frequently found their way to places where the subsequent contradiction never reached.

Mr. Secretary *Stanley* explained: He had so understood the hon. and learned Gentleman; but it was the farthest from his wish to misrepresent what had been said by him. With regard to the Primate, he had since ascertained that what he (Mr. Stanley) had said was a mis-statement, though not to any very great extent, as he had stated he had frequent discussions with the Primate on the provisions of the Bill, and the impression on his mind was, that the Primate had suggested that the least objectionable means of obtaining Reform was to reduce the number of Bishops. The

Primate had, however, informed him, and, of course, he believed it, that the suggestion came from himself, and not from the Primate. Such was the case. The Primate had certainly admitted with great candour, that if this fund were to be raised, the least objectionable mode would be by reducing the number of Bishops. He was, however, exceedingly sorry that he should in the slightest degree have misrepresented a Prelate for whom he had such high respect. He had intended to set himself right with the House on the first occasion, and he thanked the hon. and learned Member for the opportunity thus afforded him.

Mr. *Petre* supported the Bill, though he objected to some of its details. He particularly wished the fund to be applied to ecclesiastical purposes. It was with no small astonishment, however, that he had noticed the course pursued by the hon. and learned member for Dublin—he, too, who was so critical upon the conduct of others. He formerly supported the measure, and yet, on the present occasion, he had departed from his formerly declared opinions, and joined the opposition to the Bill. The hon. and learned Member had better have let that alone. He considered the Bill would be the means of allaying many of those religious animosities which prevailed in Ireland, and for that reason he gave it his support.

Lord *Castlereagh* said, he should not have trespassed upon the attention of the House at all, had he not felt himself called upon to state to the House what the feeling of the Protestants of Ireland would be, if the measure then before the House should pass into a law. On the last night he attempted to address the House, he was scouted because he alluded to the question of repeal, but he would now repeat, that the conduct of the Government, if persisted in, would drive the Protestants of Ireland into the advocacy of that measure. When the Government, whose manifest duty it was to cement, promote, and consummate that union, were dissevering the only tie by which it could exist—namely the Established Church—was it to be wondered at that the Protestants of Ireland felt disgusted with their conduct? But he would tell his Majesty's Ministry, that in the plan they proposed, the principle of interfering with private property was so manifest, that they might rest assured the moment the arch which supported the establishment in Ireland was touched by their hands, that moment the proud towers of Woburn would be rocked to their foundations. He would ask his Majesty's Government, since their acceptance of office to point to a single act of theirs which entitled them either to the confidence of the country or that of the Protestants of Ireland? What question had they touched which they had not left in a much worse condition than they found it? They called upon the House to grant them their confidence at a time when from the ranks of their adherents they were unable to select a person to fill the office of Secretary for Ireland; and were these the men, he would ask, who could be trusted with legislating for Ireland on such an important question as that then before the House? The Government might depend upon it that if appeals were made out of doors to the people, to excite them upon the subject then under discussion, appeals of a contrary nature would be made which would be responded to by the true and loyal Protestants of Ireland, many of whom, he was proud to say, he represented in that House. He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman, the Secretary for the Colonies, should have deserted Ireland at her most critical moment. If he could vote against the Bill in its present stage, he should have felt most happy to do so, but, as that was not possible, he could not sit down without entering his protest against the measure. His opinion was, that no measure of the kind affecting Ireland could be carried, without affecting the Church in England—the moment one was touched, the other must fall.

The House went into Committee *pro formâ*; the House resumed; the Chairman reported progress, and obtained leave to sit again.

LIMITATION OF ACTIONS BILL.] The Solicitor General moved the Order of the Day for the House going into a Committee upon the Limitation of Actions Bill.

Mr. *Strickland* said, he had considerable objections to this Bill. It was unwise and unjust, and he would never consent that it should become the law of England. If this Bill passed into a law, a poor man never could obtain his right. The law ought to be open to all; it was the right of the subject; but if this Bill were passed into a law, it would completely destroy the rights of the people. Against such a project, against such a Bill as the present, he must again protest. Much more he could say. His duty and his feeling commanded him to declare what he had stated, and he would say, that in making these few observations he had only done his duty [*hear.*] He was perfectly aware that his opinions were not in accordance with those of the hon. and learned Solicitor General, but, nevertheless, it was his duty to state them, however feebly, and he had done so. He could easily understand these cheers. He was aware that he had trespassed upon the indulgence of the House, but, anxious as he was to render justice to the people, he did not regret one observation which he had made. The learned Solicitor General seemed enamoured of this Bill and his other law reform Bills; but he could tell the learned Gentleman, that he was, to say the least, mistaken in his object.

The House went into Committee.

The Bill, with verbal amendments, to be reported.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, May 14, 1833.

Minutes.] Petitions presented. By the Archbishop of York, the Bishops of London, Bristol, and Chichester, and by the Earl of Radnor, from several Places,—for the Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By the Bishop of Gloucester, from the Deanery of Stow, for the Repeal or Amendment of the Sale of Beer Act.—By Earl Fitzwilliam, from Galston, for Amending the Corn Laws.—By the Dukes of Sussex and Richmond, the Archbishop of York, the Marquesses of Ailsa and Lansdown, Earls Powis, Winchilsea, Fitzwilliam, and Radnor, Lords Dacre, Barham, Godolphin, Dundas, Lynedoch, and Poltimore, and by the Bishops of Bristol, and Chester,—from a great Number of Places, against Slavery.

Corn Laws.] Earl *Fitzwilliam*, in pursuance of his notice, and in compliance with what he understood to be their Lordships' wishes, rose to call the attention of their Lordships to a subject of the greatest importance, and one which he was sure their Lordships would consider to be worthy of their most serious attention. Their Lordships would no doubt think, that many apologies were due from one who had been the most recently introduced into their Lordships' ranks, for presuming, so shortly after taking his seat in that assembly, to call on their Lordships to listen to his voice. Their Lordships might be assured that he should not have presumed so to do, if there did not press upon his mind a conviction the most intimate and the most solemn that this question was one which was not yet settled, and one which, if not settled, called upon both Houses of Parliament to enter into a consideration of its merits, with a view to such a final adjustment of it as would make, ultimately, all classes of his Majesty's subjects consent to that adjustment. He remembered well the last time when this question was discussed in the other House of Parliament; he remembered that, upon that occasion, it was introduced to the notice of the House by an hon. Gentleman who was now the Representative of the county of Middlesex; but what he particularly remembered, and what he was particularly desirous to draw their Lordships' attention to, was not so much the arguments of that hon. Gentleman as the course which was adopted in resisting the proposition which that hon. Gentleman made. At that time the office which called upon him who filled it to address the House on all questions of trade was filled by a Gentleman, whose subsequent accession to an Irish peerage removed him from the House of Commons, without raising him to a seat in their Lordships' Assembly. That Gentleman was a man of great ability and consummate talent, and he remembered well, that in the whole course of his speech he never ventured to defend the law as it at present stands, though at that time only one year had elapsed from the period when it was passed. What inference could be drawn from such an omission on the part of Lord Fitzgerald, but that when he found it necessary to draw the attention of the House, not to the merits of the law, but to the imperfections in the statements of his opponents, he drew attention to those imperfections with the hope he might deduce an argument from them in favour of that system, which, on its own merits, he could not successfully maintain. He should not, however, content himself with quoting the statements, or rather the non-statements of Lord Fitzgerald on that occasion, but would have recourse to other authority; and he hoped his noble friend, of whom he was going to speak, would not think, that he did it with any unkindness, or that he intended to draw a contrast between opinions then and opinions now; indeed he did not know whether it would turn out that there was any change of opinion in the noble individual he alluded to. In the House of Commons, in the year 1815, where the first of these ill-omened measures was proposed, he remembered what fell from his noble friend who now held the office of the Keeper of his Majesty's Privy Seal—he remembered it well indeed, without the means he had taken to refresh his memory; but as he had taken those means, he would call the attention of the House to an extract from his noble friend's speech on that occasion. 'In looking to 'the principles which should guide their 'decision, the House ought to recollect, 'that they were not now in the situation 'of arguing, for the first time, whether 'they should act on the principle of restriction or not. For not only on the 'subject of corn, but on all great branches 'of trade in this country, they had, from 'time immemorial, proceeded on a system 'of restriction. And therefore he contended, they were not now placed in a 'situation of discussing first principles. 'They were not now, for the first time, to 'inquire whether they were to act on this 'principle or not. The system had been 'acted on for a long period, and we could 'not depart from it without encountering 'a frightful revulsion, which it would be 'dreadful to combat. It was not, therefore, a question between restriction and 'non-restriction, but how they were to 'apply principles that had been long 'called into action, to the existing circumstances of the country. This was 'the only ground on which he would now 'recommend the measure he was about to 'submit to their consideration.'* The principle of that law, as it appeared from that statement, was restriction; but he did not quote these authorities to support that view which he supposed no noble Lord would deny, but to request their Lordships to compare it with the system which had been since introduced. He asked their Lordships to compare it, in order to see how it formed a part and parcel of the present system. Before he had done with authorities, he would take the liberty of quoting one more, of a more recent date, and equally distinguished. Their Lordships would probably recollect, that the present Act was passed in 1828, and that it was a substitute for that Bill which was rejected in 1827, which it nearly resembled. Their Lordships would recollect, that the Bill of 1827 was proposed by Mr. Canning, and that in 1828 the propositions were submitted to Parliament by his right hon. friend (Mr. Grant) the President of the Board of Control; and it was superfluous in him to say, that whatever fell from that right hon. Gentleman was worthy of attention. In 1828, that right hon. Gentleman said: "In moving these Resolutions," and their Lordships would observe, that the Resolutions spoken of were the basis of that Act, "he had spoken of these Resolutions as an introduction to something better; but in one point of view they were permanent. They were permanent until the minds of men could be led to entertain juster notions on the subject, and would be changed only as the notions which at present prevailed were altered for the better."* He had, therefore, the high authority of his right hon. friend, and there could be none higher, that the Resolutions, which were the base of the present system, were not the best which could be devised. Permanency, indeed, could hardly be required; and his right hon. friend contemplated the law as permanent in relation to the Legislature, only till men's minds were brought to entertain juster notions. Their Lordships might be assured, that he should not now agitate the question, if he had not a well-founded conviction, as well as the conviction derived from the opinions of men of high authority—men, indeed, for whom he entertained the highest reverence—that this question was not settled. It was that conviction which induced him to call their Lordships' attention to the subject. He said, it was a question which must be opened. The question could not even now be settled, and there must be before the final adjustment of it, repeated discussions. If he were to state what period should be chosen for the discussion of this question, he would say, that it would be wise and prudent to enter into a calm consideration of the question when there was no agitation. He knew that the question of these laws and regulations were a subject of extreme delicacy; he knew that, and he asked his noble friend who cheered him whether it were not better to discuss the question when there was no agitation and no anxiety on the subject? Their Lordships might be disposed to say, why agitate the question now, when it excited no interest? That was the very period for discussing it, for there would be much danger in discussing the question—and none of their Lordships could say, that time might not arrive—when corn was at 90*s*. or 100*s*. per quarter. Their Lordships might depend on it, if the question were discussed, under national excitement, they would not come to a wise and prudent determination, or settle the question as it ought to be. He was afraid he must offer some excuse to their Lordships for some of the terms he might use, and he would not use them if he could express his ideas by other words. Let him then ask their Lordships what was the object of the Corn-laws? [A *Noble Lord:* To promote the cultivation of the land, and feed the people.] He understood his noble friend. His noble friend said, to procure the cultivation of the country, and that the people might be fed. He wished also to see the people fed; but had their Lordships examined the Bill under this aspect? Had their Lordships examined the various papers laid on the Table of that and the other House of Parliament? The object of the Corn-laws was to secure for the country an independent supply of food. Had their Lordships looked at the quantity of corn imported last year, and at the quantity imported every year since the Bill was passed? The noble Earl (Earl Malmesbury) had moved for a series of papers, not to show that we were independent of foreign countries, but to show the immense quantity imported from abroad, and that the farmers and landlords were ruined by the importation; in fact the country was not independent of foreign supply. It might have been independent at the beginning or middle of the last century; but with a metropolis containing 1,300,000 persons, and with a country covered with vast cities, it was impossible, that this country should ever again be independent of a foreign supply of corn. That being the fact, the only object of consideration was, on what conditions and terms corn should be imported. Let it be remembered, that it could be excluded only by checking the increase of the population. If they prohibited the importation of corn they must check the growth of population. In order, then, to promote the cultivation of the country, and make it worth while for the occupiers to till the soil, they must take measures to check the growth of the population. He looked upon these as identical propositions. But how was the stimulus to cultivation to be produced? It was undeniable, that it was by enhancing the price of corn. To ensure a certain price, they laid restrictions on importation, and the consequence of that was—and he begged their Lordships' pardon, for the term he was about to use—was to cause a modified scarcity of corn. He said, a modified scarcity of corn; for if that were not caused, the price would not rise. If that were not the operation of the Act, why did they not throw open the ports? It was impossible not to see, that the means by which the ulterior object of cultivating the country was obtained, was of raising the price of corn, and causing a modified scarcity. Those who entertained that opinion took an erroneous view of the causes of increased cultitivation. The next point he came to was, how had the Corn-laws operated? There was not one of their Lordships who did not know, that the period between 1815 and 1833 was not one of prosperity to the various interests connected with agriculture. His noble friend near him (Lord Western) assented to the remark that this period had been one of suffering. During that period they had had the exclusive Corn-law of 1815. The object of that law was, to impose restrictions on the importation, and raise the price higher than in other parts of Europe. In that law two classes were interested — the agricultural or farming interest, and the consumers. How had the law operated for the farmers? With respect to the law of 1815, it was one of the most signal instances of failure to be found in the history of legislation. That law was passed by a great majority of the other House, and in their Lordships' House it had passed without any opposition. It was therefore the joint effort of both Houses of Parliament. Their Lordships would, however, recollect, that in 1821 and 1822, they were alternately assailed by the agriculturists and manufacturers complaining, the one of privations, and the other that corn was too cheap. Their Lordships would recollect, that in the winter of 1821-22, wheat fell below 40*s*. the quarter, though the law said, that there should be no importation till the price rose to 80*s*. By that law the farmers were deluded to believe, that 80*s*., as was promised by legal enactments, would be secured to them. On that delusion they offered and promised to pay rent in proportion, expecting to realise the full price of 80*s*. In 1821, the price dropped, from an abundant harvest, from previous importations; and the farmers, who had made their contracts, and promised rent, expecting 80*s*. the quarter for wheat, obtained only 40*s*. What was the inference? Why, that this system could not be maintained. It was adverse to the nature of things. Providence would not permit such a scheme to succeed, and those who promoted it saw their plans most signally defeated. No person acquainted with the state of the agricultural interest in 1821 and 1822, but would admit, that the law of 1815 was a most complete and signal failure. Many of their Lordships, he believed, had let their land to their tenants, and their tenants had promised to pay rents upon the supposition, thatcorn would be 80*s*. per quarter. Their Lordships had made a mistake—he did not say, that it had been done from rapacity; but their tenants had entered into engagements which they could not possibly fulfil. He would boldly assert, that there never was a period of modern times, in which the agricultural interest suffered so much as in 1821 and 1822, when they had all the advantage which the law of 1815 could confer on them. That law, then, was good neither for the landlord, the farmer, nor the consumer. At length Parliament grew more enlightened; the Corn-law of 1822 was passed but never acted on, and therefore, in fact, from 1815 to 1828 the corn trade was regulated by the law of 1815. In 1828 Parliament had grown much wiser, it passed the present law, which he considered infinitely better than the law of 1815. He did not hold that opinion out of any respect to the sliding scale of that Bill, but because it lowered the importation price. The first price of that scale was, he believed, 63*s*., which bore the same relation to the Act of 1828 as the price of 84*s*. bore to the law of 1815. Had the law of 1828 worked well to the agricultural class? To that class the great object was steadiness of price. In his opinion it was neither high nor low price which the agriculturists wanted so much as steadiness of price. The noble Duke opposite (the Duke of Wellington) would probably argue that the Act of 1818 contributed to effect a steadiness of price, but he would show, that was not the case. Steadiness of price, it should be remembered, was in this instance required for the agriculturists, and he would examine that question not by the general average of prices in the general market, but by the prices of corn in what he might call markets of production. [A noble *Lord* asked, what did the noble Earl mean?] He would illustrate his meaning. Markets he thought were fairly divisible into two kinds—markets of production, and markets of consumption. Devizes was a market of production. Wakefield and Manchester were markets of consumption. To show what he meant, he would take the average price of corn in some market of production, and not refer to the general averages. It was in such a market that prices ought to be steady, if this Act had worked well for the farmer. Their Lordships all knew the town of Stamford, on the great North Road, which though not the greatest, was a very considerable market of production. On October 30th, 1827—that was before the Bill passed, but it would serve to show the working of the law—and on January 15th, 1828, the price was 5*s*. 10½*d*. per bushel. On October 28th, 1828, after a bad harvest, the average price was 9*s*. 10½*d*.; thus there was in a few short months a difference of between 5*s*. 10½*d*. and 9*s* 10½*d*. On November 24th, 1829, the price fell to 6*s*. 10½*d*.; in January, 1830, it was 6*s*. 8½*d*. and on February 15th, 1831, it was 9*s*. 11½*d*.; again in the June following it was 8*s*. 2*d*.; and in December 6*s*. 10½*d*. Nothing, then, could be more erroneous than to say, that this system kept prices steady in the markets of production. The next statement of prices, to which he would refer was a very considerable market, one of the most considerable markets, indeed, of the north of England. In Malton, the average price in November, 1827, was 44*s*. 11*d*. per quarter; in March, 1829, it was 82*s*. 8*d*.; in March, 1830, the average was 51*s*. 1*d*.; in September, 1830, it was 73*s*. 11*d*. From that it had fallen down to 56*s*. and 54*s*. That showed that steadiness of price had not been obtained by the Act of 1828, and he knew that it never could be obtained by legislative enactment. He was aware of the influence of the seasons as well as other noble Lords, and he therefore condemned those who wished to obtain that by legislative enactments which could not be obtained. In fact the law had left the farmer exposed to all the fluctuations of the seasons, while it had cheated him by making him believe, that he would invariably receive at least 80*s*. per quarter. He must next touch upon another branch of the subject, that which referred to the effect which the existing law had upon the consumers at large. He might, perhaps, here state, that he had not had much intercourse with their Lordships, except with a few who were his private and personal friends; but he could not help stating, that from what he had seen, heard, and read, their Lordships' House was not the place in which the importance of the manufacturing and commercial prosperity was estimated at the highest rate. The prosperity of those interests was not pursued here in the manner in which, according to his humble judgment, it ought to be; and if he was asked his reasons for this statement, he should say, that the present Corn-law was a proof of the allegation. He would tell those who disbelieved this statement to consider what had been the effect of this measure upon the price of commodities, and the further effect of creating a high rate of wages, so injurious to the manufactures of the country, as connected with foreign competition, even if it did not tend to the abolition of the commerce of the country. There were certain persons in this country, who said, that machinery was so improved that it mattered not what was the price of manual labour. These gentlemen could not have visited the workshops, manufactories, or the counting-houses of the merchant, or they would find that even now, with all the assistance of machinery, wages formed a great item in the price of every manufactured article, and enhanced the difficulty of competition with foreign manufacturers in the markets of the world; and he would take leave to say, that it would require great ingenuity to show, that it signified nothing to the prosperity of British commerce whether wages were high or low. He did not wish to insist that the price of corn exclusively regulated the price of labour; but in the long run it must have an effect, unless another circumstance, which no individual would wish to see, took place—namely, a deterioration in the situation and condition of the labourer. There were but two alternatives in the event of a rise in the price of corn—either to raise the price of wages, in order to continue the labourer in the same condition, or his condition must be deteriorated, in order to enable the British manufacturer and merchant to compete with foreign manufacturers. That was a proposition which he believed it was impossible to overthrow. The whole of the manufacturing interests then were implicated, for if on a rise in the price of corn an increased rate of wages must follow, the manufacturer must either sacrifice his profits or be driven out of the foreign markets. No man would desire to see any such results. If this were a country which had no commercial intercourse with foreign nations, it would not matter what the price of corn might be; but as a great commercial and manufacturing nation, they should be careful not to pass laws which enhanced the difficulty of competition and lowered the profits of the manufacturers. There was no other alternative. Either the condition of our labourer must be deteriorated, we must be driven from the foreign market, or the profits of stock must be lowered. He remembered that he had a few weeks before seen an answer given by a noble Earl, not now in his place, to a proposition made to him for the formation of a political club in the county of Worcester. That noble Earl was stated to have answered, that he saw no reason for a Conservative club, because his rents had been well paid, and the three per cents were extraordinarily high. It had not occurred to the noble Earl, that in stating the high price of stock he was stating one of the great grievances under which the country laboured: the high price of stock—for instance, the three per cents at 90*l*.—was neither more nor less than a low state of profits. This was the great cause of the grievances about which both Houses were assailed, and he believed that if the small tradesmen with a capital of 2,000*l*. to 3,000*l*. could realize a profit of ten per cent, nothing would have been heard of a repeal of the House and Window-tax, or of agricultural distress. To a man of 100,000*l*. capital a diminution of profit would not be ruin, though his profits were reduced from 8,000*l*. to 300*l*. or 400*l*.; but to a man with 1,000*l*. capital, by turning which he might realize an income of 100*l*. per annum, a diminution to 30*l*. or 40*l*. would be absolute ruin. Their Lordships were no doubt aware that a great difference of opinion existed as to the cause of capital bearing a low rate of interest, and that the opinion of Adam

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* Hansard, xxix. p. 801.

* Hansard (new series) xviii. p. 1385.

Smith was, that the lowness of profit arose from abundance of capital. Others had argued differently, and with much plausibility had asserted, that high taxation was the most efficient cause of lowness of profit. If that were true and it appeared probable, because profits were low in England, and taxation very high, let their Lordships look at the effects of the Corn-laws. It must be admitted, that the Corn-laws were as much a tax upon the community as was the Malt-duty, or any other impost, and there could be but little doubt that their operation tended to increase the price of wheat somewhat about 8*s*. or 10*s*. per quarter. Now, if the fact were so, and the consumption of wheat were 16,000,000 quarters per annum, that was at once a tax of 8,000,000*l*. levied on the country. He had not the shadow of a doubt that the sum was at least that. But let not their Lordships suppose, that the whole of the sum was saved to the agricultural interest. A large portion of it went for the increase of the expense of cultivation, and, he believed, that the community was injured to that extent. He thought, therefore, that the landed interest inflicted an injury on the other classes for a profit which was not worth contention. He had no doubt the operation of the Corn-laws effected a taxation of 8,000,000*l*. annually, which was no small capital, and if it had been in the power of the Government to come down at the commencement of the present Session and offer a reduction of 4,000,000*l*. he believed there would not have been an individual who would not have felt deeply indebted; and how much more so, if, instead of 4,000,000*l*., the reduction had been, in the way he had thrown out, 8,000,000*l*.—the obligation would have been enhanced. This would have been effected by the alteration of the existing Corn-laws, which were as much a tax as any paid into his Majesty's Exchequer. The Corn-laws were not only a vexatious direct tax, but they were a vexatious indirect tax; they operated, for instance, in making his noble friend there pay more for his white waistcoat, and made him pay more for his dinner and for everything else; for the high price of corn, of course, raised the price of labour, and thus every thing became dearer. It was a matter of no consequence to the man who paid it, whether the additional price went to the King, in the shape of revenue, or to the landowner in the shape of rent. Noble Lords said, indeed, that they must keep up rent. But why? It seemed rather an extraordinary proposition. One did not, at first sight, perceive why they should so particularly make that one class of persons an exclusive object of regard. But there was a reason—and what was it? That landlords were oppressed with a great variety of burthens—with tithes—with Poor-rates — with county-rates — with mortgages—and other private debts; and that, therefore, it was necessary to keep up rents in order that they might be enabled to bear all those charges. If that were the object, then the rent of land was to be kept up by raising the price of corn; and the real object of the Corn Bill was, to raise the rent of land. He defied any man to deny that proposition. But why should this peculiar regard be shown to the landowners? He entertained a great respect for the landed gentry of England. He thought them as respectable as any other class of the community, but he would not pay them the compliment of saying that they were better. Vice and virtue were, according to the dispensation of Providence, equally distributed amongst all classes of society, and he believed that the landowners of England were as good as the weavers or chimney-sweepers, or any other class of the general community of this country, but not a whit better. He saw no reason that could be called a reason, in the proper sense of the word, why a law should be passed giving to the landed proprietors of England, at the expense of the rest of the community, a larger capital than they would otherwise possess. It might be said, that they had passed laws to protect trade and manufactures, but they had repealed those laws. His noble friend near him said "*No*" to that assertion, but he would repeat it, and was ready to prove it. [Earl Grey was understood to say, that the prohibitory duties on manufactured articles had been only reduced to thirty per cent]. Well, his noble friend admitted that there had been a reduction to thirty per cent. Was thirty per cent the amount to which they taxed themselves, in regard to the importation of foreign corn? No such thing. His noble friend was well aware that it was not thirty per cent, but sixty or seventy per cent. He would maintain that it was. If it was not, the whole of the argument on the other side of the question was at an end.

What was the price of corn at Dantzic? The medium price was about 30*s.* per quarter. [The Duke of *Wellington*—"35*s.*"] Well, he would take it at 35*s.* What was the amount of duty on foreign wheat at the present moment in England? About 30*s.* If their Lordships would refer to the Corn-law at present in existence, they would find that 63*s.* per quarter for wheat in England was the medium price which it selected, and at that price the duty on foreign corn was 23*s.* 8*d.* per quarter, according to the provisions of the Act. He was well aware that that was not the duty levied; but that fact constituted in itself another argument against the provisions of that Bill. But when stating the duty, he was entitled to take it at 23*s.* 8*d.*, and that amount of duty upon wheat bought at 35*s.* per quarter was equivalent to a duty of from sixty to seventy per cent. Was there any sense of justice in such a proceeding? Was it fair—was it honest towards the people of England—that they should be told that they should not eat foreign corn until it was taxed double the amount of any other commodity imported into this country? He for one doubted the wisdom of imposing a duty of thirty per cent upon foreign manufactured articles; but he would not go into that subject now. He would say, that it was neither just nor wise that they should tax the principal necessaries of life at a far higher rate than silk and cotton, and other such commodities. They had reduced the duty on silk to thirty per cent, and what had been the effect of that measure? Why, that we actually became exporters of manufactured silk, not only to the Continent generally, but even into France itself. But it would be said, that the land owners were oppressed. Why, the whole country, all the classes—all the interests in it—were oppressed. But then it was asked, "Will you throw the labourers out of employment?" He would do no such thing. He would ask in reply, "Did the present Corn-laws keep them in employment?" Would any man say they did? Let their Lordships look for a moment to the report of the Poor-law Commissioners, and they would there see how far it could be said that the labouring classes were employed at present. Let them look to the reports from Cambridge, Buckinghamshire, and Sussex; and they would see, that the present Corn-laws had no such effect. Would they continue them with the hope that they would produce an effect which, long as they had been in operation, they had not brought about? For his own part he doubted whether the landed interest as a particular class was more oppressed than any other class of the community. He would next draw their Lordships' attention to the effect which the rise in the price of corn had upon the Poor-rates. They could see, that in different parts of England it had the effect of directly increasing their amount. There were one or two facts of such a remarkable nature connected with this part of the subject, that he could not avoid stating them to their Lordships. In the year 1816 we had one of the worst harvests ever experienced. In the summer of 1817 the price of corn rose to 117*s.* the quarter. It fell, in the subsequent part of the year, but the average price of corn in that year was 94*s.* 9*d.* a-quarter. He would just state the average price of corn for three consecutive years, and then the amount of the Poor-rates during the same period in one of the agricultural counties, the county of Sussex. The average price of corn was—In 1816, 75*s.* 10*d.*; in 1817, 95*s.* 9*d.*; in 1818, 84*s.* 10*d.* The Poor-rates in the county of Sussex were—In 1816, 280,000*l.*; in 1817, 330,000*l.*; in 1818, 314,000*l.* It would be thus perceived, that in the county of Sussex the amount of the Poor-rates varied exactly in the same ratio as the rise and fall in the price of corn. The same observation would apply to the manufacturing districts. The noble Earl read a tabular statement, to show that a similar variation in the Poor-rate, depending upon the price of corn, had taken place in three different districts in the West Riding of Yorkshire, the population of which was as great as that of the average of the agricultural counties; therefore it was, he said, plain, that the rise in the price of corn did not increase the employment of the labourers. The amount of the labourers employed depended upon the rise in the profits of stock in the country, and the principal and most effectual way to accomplish that object, was to get rid of the Corn-laws. The Report of the Poor-law Commissioners proved demonstratively, that the Corn-laws had afforded no assistance towards producing employment for the agricultural labourers. Why, then, anticipate from them a better effect in future? Of this he was certain, that, in this country, there was no opening to be found for the better employment of the people but in the extension of manufacturing industry; their Lordships should not underrate the value of manufacturing and commercial enterprise. He might be mistaken—he hoped that he was—in supposing that that House did not place as high a value upon the application of such branches of industry, as those which were more immediately connected with their Lordships. That the fact was so he had not the smallest doubt. Now, one of his objects in bringing forward this Motion was, to impress upon their Lordships, the expediency of their not doing anything in legislating that should be injurious to manufacturing industry, and that the Corn-laws were so he hoped to be able to show to their Lordships. One other argument against the free importation of foreign corn was, that it would destroy the independence of this country in maintaining within itself a sufficient supply of corn. He well recollected the effect of a speech upon that subject delivered in the other House by a right hon, friend of his noble friend near him—he referred to the speech of Mr. Elliot, which, at the time it was made, produced great alarm. The result had shown how unfounded were the fears which that speech was calculated to excite with regard to the importation of foreign corn. How visionary were the apprehensions that the importation of foreign corn would destroy the independence of this country, so as to place us in the power of other countries, more especially of France! If it were possible to conceive the manufacture of an instrument to measure the intensity of hostility between this country and France, he was sure it would show, that it was in 1810 that hostilities had risen to their highest point. Now, in that very year 1810, there was a large importation of foreign corn into this country. At that very period, when Buonaparte was in full power on the throne of France, and when the noble Duke opposite was fighting his generals in the Peninsula—at that period, when the war had assumed its worst and most destructive aspect, as would be seen from the admirable description of it in some of the chapters of that book which was far above his praise—he meant Colonel Napier's *History of the Peninsular War*,—at that very period, when England was the special object of the hostility of France, and when the Berlin and Milan decrees were in existence,—at that very period there was an importation into this country of 1,500,000 quarters of foreign wheat, the great proportion of which came from France itself. That fact showed, that it was most idle and absurd to entertain any apprehensions with regard to the independence of this country in supplying itself with corn. Such a large importation at such a period proved such fears to be quite groundless. [The Duke of *Wellington* across the Table: It was without duty.] True, there was no duty then, but the fact showed the absurdity of a duty. The average price of corn at the time was 100*s*. the quarter, so that, if the present duty had even been in existence then, it would have had no operation whatever. The fact, he repeated, proved that the fears about the independence of the country as to the supply of corn were entirely visionary. It was morally and physically impossible that this country, with its great metropolis and studded as it was with other great towns, could do without the importation of corn. Thank God the time was gone by when that importation could be absolutely prohibited. It was our prosperity that prevented us from being independent of that supply, and those who would make us independent, must first destroy half the cities and towns that ornamented and enlightened this great country. If the law, then, did not secure the farmer against those fluctuations to which nature rendered corn liable, while it tended to raise the price of corn in this country much higher than it was in the other countries of Europe, was not that sufficient to pronounce a condemnation of the Corn-laws? This country, under the present system, could not compete with Holland and Belgium, because the price of corn was much higher here than it was in those countries. He might be asked if he would propose that the price of corn should be kept as low as it was at Dantzic and Odessa. He would propose no such thing, for this, amongst other reasons, that it would be absolutely impossible. The state of our wealthy population rendered it physically impossible. He did not want to have corn as cheap as it was in countries where there were no manufacturers; but he wanted to have it cheap as compared with countries, which were, like ourselves, manufacturers, importers, and consumers. Why should we continue a system that raised the price of corn, the food of man, ten or twelve per cent, higher than it was in the countries on the banks of the Rhine and the Elbe? For his part, he must confess his inability to discover the wisdom of such a course of proceeding. He could not see the usefulness of making people of this country eat their bread at a dearer rate than those, who, like ourselves, were obliged to have recourse to other countries for a supply of a portion of their food. Till that was made out—till the wisdom and justice of such a proceeding were established, the Corn Bill of 1828, as well as the Corn Bill of 1815, like which, though not so bad, contained within it the same evils, stood self-condemned. Was it possible that any man, taking a fair view of the prosperity of the country, would say, that it derived any advantage from the factitious rise in the price of corn. The argument in its favour was, that it was necessary to keep up the price to its present level in order to keep in cultivation some land which would not pay the expense of cultivation, if the present Corn-laws were abolished. He admitted that there might be some few spots of land which would not pay the expense of cultivation if those laws were abolished; but he could not admit, that they ought to tax the whole of the people of England, in order to keep in cultivation a few sterile furlongs. He had no doubt that spots had been brought into cultivation during the late war, in consequence of the high prices; but he thought that no man in his senses would wish to keep up the war price of corn, in order that those spots might continue to be cultivated. If he had continued a Member of the other House, he would have adopted a different course in bringing the Corn-laws under consideration; and he should have looked forward with something bordering upon hope to the adoption of a change in the system; but considering that, in this House, the subject had not been discussed for years, he would adopt the course which he considered would be most conducive to the interests of the country, and the convenience of their Lordships, and merely move that their Lordships should enter into the consideration of the Resolutions which he had had the honour of introducing on a former evening. He was desirous of breaking ground, and bringing those laws under discussion, for the purpose of having them finally set at rest. He did not mean by setting them at rest that they should be settled in such a manner as to benefit any particular class of the community exclusively—he meant that they should be settled so as to benefit all classes. And, certainly, no class was more interested in the final settlement (and no settlement could be final but one based on the principles of free trade) than the occupiers of land. As long as the Statute-book contained a law which held out to the owners and tenants an idea that prices should be maintained at a greater height than was natural, or than could be maintained at all times (as in the instance of an exuberant harvest), so long would the occupiers of land be in difficulties. Such an unnatural state of things deranged all the relations between landlord and tenant. The landlord would always look to a price for his land, according to the Corn-law. He looked under the Corn-laws, as they formerly stood, for 80*s.*; and under the present laws 64*s.*, was taken as the standard by which he valued the price of his lands. But these prices the tenant did not realize, and he consequently became distressed. Whether he looked, therefore, to the interest of the agriculturist (that was, the cultivator), or of the manufacturing population, or to the ultimate interest of the proprietor of land (he said ultimate interest, because he admitted that there might be a temporary advantage to the proprietor in a continuance of the present system), he would say, that that House could not confer a greater benefit upon the country, or perform a duty which would be received with greater gratitude out of doors, than by going into a consideration of the laws which regulated the duties upon corn. The noble Earl concluded by begging pardon for having detained their Lordships so long, and hoped that the magnitude of the question would be his excuse. He begged leave to move the first Resolution.

The Earl of *Ripon* said, that having brought forward the Bill in the other House, which had been so severely condemned by the noble Earl and most inaccurately described by him, and having been a party to the Bill brought forward by the noble Duke opposite in 1828, he felt a great anxiety to state to their Lordships the opinion which he had formed on the Resolutions proposed on a former evening by the noble Earl. He admitted that the noble Earl had not over-stated the importance of the subject; and he thought it of so much importance that it should be set at rest, that he considered it the duty of the Government to state directly and unequivocally the views which they entertained upon the subject. Before proceeding to the consideration of the Resolutions—Resolutions which he thought it impossible that their Lordships could pass—he wished to advert to an expression made use of by the noble Earl. That noble Earl had said, that he was addressing an assembly which did not adequately feel the conflicting interests which prevailed concerning this question.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* said, that he had not said so. He had merely said, that that House did not fully appreciate the importance of the subject to the manufacturing classes.

The Earl of *Ripon* thought the sentiment was identically the same; and he must say, that if their Lordships did not fully appreciate the importance of the subject to the manufacturing classes, they were not fit to appreciate the proper force of the different conflicting interests which were involved in the subject. And when the noble Earl told them of the different course which he would have pursued if he had continued to be a Member of the House of Commons, he said, that he would then have at least a glimmering hope that the subject should be attended to. In that House, however, he had no such hope; he was surrounded with the impenetrable darkness of the House of Lords, and he had not even a glimmering hope that he could penetrate it. He heard such a statement from the noble Earl with great pain. It was but too much of a piece with opinions stated elsewhere, and was calculated to create much mischief; and he had heard such a sentiment expressed by a Member of that House with much regret. He would now go into the consideration of the argument by which the noble Earl had endeavoured to support his Resolutions; and in which, in his (the Earl of Ripon's) opinion, he had totally failed. The noble Lord had said, that they greatly deceived themselves, if they thought that the question of the Corn-laws was settled. He (the Earl of Ripon) would ask if any question was settled so far, that no change could be made in it? All that a statesman could do was, to lay down a set of principles, and to legislate according to those principles. Every statesman knew that a measure could not be considered as settled in the view stated by the noble Earl. With regard to the Resolutions proposed by the noble Earl, he would beg leave to ask what plan the noble Earl meant to substitute for the system which he wished to abolish? As far as the Resolutions went, and as far as he could gather from the noble Earl's speech, the noble Earl had no plan, at least he had suggested none. He told them, indeed, that the question could not be settled, except upon the basis of free trade. But that was all. Now he (the Earl of Ripon) had often considered what free trade was, and had spoken to many other persons on the subject, and he never could get an answer to the question. If the noble Lord meant that there was to be no duty, he could understand him; but he had admitted at the same time, that there might be a duty, and argued in favour of a fixed duty. If the proposal of the noble Earl were acceded to, the public opinion would very soon overturn the fixed duty. Nay more, there had not been a single argument brought forward by the noble Earl in favour of the Corn-laws as they now stood, which would not apply with tenfold force to the plan approved of by the noble Earl. He objected to the noble Earl's Resolutions; in the first place, because the time and circumstances were not favourable to the discussion; secondly, on account of the gross fallacies on which the Resolutions were founded; thirdly, on account of the fallacious conclusions drawn by the noble Earl from those false premises; and finally, because the noble Earl proposed to pull down the present structure without being prepared with a plan and materials for a better building. The noble Earl said, that this was a proper time to take the subject into consideration, because there was no clamour about it, and the subject could be taken calmly into consideration. He admitted the strength of that argument, if the noble Earl had made out the necessity of any change; but he denied that a case of such necessity had been made out. He would go further; he would say, that in his premises the noble Earl was wrong, for the present was a most dangerous period to introduce such a subject. He thought this, first, on account of the present situation of England; secondly, on account of the situation of Ireland, which the noble Earl did not appear to have taken into consideration at all; and thirdly, on account of several possessions of this country abroad, which were deeply interested in the subject of the Corn-laws. With regard to this country, he thought the discussion at present improper on account of the effect which it would have upon the situation of the agricultural population. It would make a complete change in the system of the Poor-laws, and they had seen, from the Report of the Poor-law Commissioners how important a subject that was. He could not allude to that Report without stating, that he considered it one calculated to create the most uneasy and anxious feelings in the hearts of those who considered it, and one which called for the serious consideration of all who heard him. He objected, therefore, to the present Motion, because it tended to unsettle everything connected with the labouring poor, at a time when they had evidence before them that their situation was full of uncertainty and danger. To him it appeared madness to attempt a change fraught with so much danger. Then, with regard to Ireland, the noble Earl had not even adverted to that country. He had not adverted to the great quantity of corn imported from Ireland, or to the effect which the change proposed by him might have on the state of that country. He certainly was not prepared to say, that the abolition of the Corn-laws would have the effect of extinguishing the cultivation of wheat in Ireland, but it might have that effect; and he would ask, if they ought even to risk such a result in the present situation of that country. It was dreadful to contemplate the situation of the peasantry even at the present time; but if the cultivation of wheat were abandoned, the employment of labourers would be diminished, and it was fearful to contemplate the result of such increased want of employment. It would necessarily impose on the Legislature the necessity of adding to those melancholy laws which it had become their duty lately to pass. And he was sure that every Englishman would regret the passing of any measure which might render it impossible to restore to Ireland the full benefit of a free Constitution. Then, with regard to the interest of the colonies, were they not encouraging the poor of this country to emigrate to those countries; and even extending pecuniary aid to them to enable them to go to those colonies? And he would ask what drove the people to desert their country and their friends, to go to a distant and unknown land? Was there anything but the chance which they had of enjoying comforts there which they had failed to obtain at home? And on what, he begged to know, had they to depend for those additional comforts? On nothing but that very wheat which the noble Earl wished practically to exclude, by permitting the introduction of the wheat of all other countries. He thought, that the plan of the noble Earl, if adopted, would be the most deadly blow ever aimed at those colonies. There was another objection to the Resolutions proposed by the noble Earl which he wished to allude to—namely, that the Corn-laws had been changed three times already within the last eighteen years; that, however, he (the Earl of Ripon) would not consider a sufficient reason for not changing them a fourth time; but he thought that it imposed a greater necessity on the noble Earl to make out a necessity for any additional alteration. He would now call the attention of their Lordships to the Resolutions themselves. The first Resolution contained a statement of the prices of corn at certain periods, and was intended by the noble Earl to show the great variation of the prices of corn and the consequent inefficiency of the present laws; but the noble Earl had made his calculations from the result of single weeks, instead of taking the average of six weeks, which was the system on which the duties were regulated under those laws; and, had he calculated the result of every six weeks, he would have found, that the fluctuations would be much less than had been stated by the noble Earl. He thought, therefore, that the first Resolution, as it did not prove, that the fluctuation was nearly so great as that supposed by the noble Earl, went for nothing, and should be left out of consideration entirely. Even if the calculations of his noble friend were true, they would militate against what he wished to establish, for they would prove, that the result of what he proposed would be a tremendous fluctuation in the price of corn. Of all the fallacious calculations that could be brought forward, was that of taking the ports of Havre and Marseilles for data to prove the small fluctuations in the price of corn in France. Indeed, it would be impossible that anything like an equalization of prices in corn could be established in that country, because the difficulties of transport, and many other local and incidental difficulties, should be taken into consideration, and they could never be calculated fairly. Though the fluctuation of prices, taking Havre and Marseilles as data, might be comparatively trifling, the fluctuations in the price of corn in the inland towns of France were so great, that the noble Lord could never rely on those he drew from the prices in the above-mentioned seaport towns; consequently, that part of the noble Lord's Resolution was deserving but of very little confidence. In 1832 the fluctuation in France was much greater than here. In the spring of that year the prices in this country, from the 6th of April to the 6th of July, varied from 59*s.* 2*d.* to 62*s.* 3*d.* What was the case in France? In April, the price at Havre was 52*s.* 1*d.*, and in July it was the same. In Marseilles, the price at the same period was 64*s.* 3*d.* But, what was the case in other parts of France in the same year? He quoted from a French publication *L'Echo de la Halle des Bles* regularly published in Paris. On the 31st of May, in the town of Arles, the price was 72*s.*, with an alarming deficiency of corn. There was no deficiency here at the time. At Rochelle the price was 77*s.* 4*d.*; at Challons, from 63*s.* to 75*s.*; at Metz, 72*s.* 6*d.* on the 17th June, with a great deficiency; at Strasburgh, 64*s.* 2*d.*, with great disturbances in consequence of scarcity. At Paris, the price varied from 69*s.* to 72*s.* 2*d.*; at Nantz, 89*s.* 3*d.*; Strasburgh, 87*s.* Now, in these instances, there was a much greater fluctuation than took place here during the same time. There was, however, a Corn-law in France, but it was a very bad one. These facts went far to overturn the deductions which his noble friend would draw from his Resolutions. The next Resolution of his noble friend, the 4th, related to a duty on corn. He was not quite aware what his noble friend meant by that statement. The deduction which he drew from the facts which had transpired since 1828 was, that we had got a large supply of foreign corn at an average duty of 6*s.* 8*d.* the quarter. It was higher at times, but this was the average. After all the clamour made against the law, the result showed, that it had neither caused excessive fluctuations, nor kept the supply short, nor had it imposed a heavy burthen on the people. He never heard any person propose a less duty than 6*s.* 8*d.* The least was 12*s.*; yet, practically, foreign corn was introduced at a less rate of duty, and, by the graduated scale, the supply was regulated by the wants of the market. The object of the law of 1815 was not to raise the price of corn. When he brought forward that measure, he avowed that such was not the object, and contended that the effect would be to make 80*s.* the maximum and not the minimum of price. It was utterly impossible entirely to prevent fluctuation in the price of such an article as corn, though it might be and had been so regulated by the law of 1814 as to secure a supply when required, and at the same time to prevent the ruin of the farmers. For his part he could not imagine a more satisfactory system than this. If the noble Lord looked to a duty on corn as a permanent source of revenue, he would oppose any such proposition *totis viribus.* No Government could stand five days which attempted to extract a revenue from the import of corn; that would be indeed trifling with the feelings of the people, and justifying the imputations which had been thrown on the Legislature as desiring to starve the people in order to keep up rents and taxes. The seventh Resolution was one of no importance, though he would object to it on technical grounds. In fact, it assumed too much, for it asserted that nothing was more injurious to the cultivator than fluctuations in price, which, though injurious, were not quite so mischievous as many other things. In the 8th Resolution, his noble friend admitted that fluctuations could not be altogether prevented in the price of an article the production of which was necessarily affected by the variations in the seasons; at the same time, the noble Lord went on to say, that it did not appear to the House that the existing regulations for the trade in foreign corn had succeeded in diminishing those fluctuations, but that, on the contrary, they had a tendency to aggravate them. The way to try this question was, to look at the fluctuations which took place under former laws. He held in his hand documents which showed the prices of corn for the last twenty years, taking periods of three years each. The documents to which he alluded were the Gazettes. Now, how did the case stand? Taking from the returns which had been made to Parliament compiled from the Gazettes, the price of wheat, during the last twenty years, in periods of three years, he found that in 1813, 1814, and 1815, the highest price was 120*s.* 8*d.*, the lowest 54*s.* 8*d.*—a fluctuation of 119 per cent. In 1816, 1817, and 1818, the highest price of wheat was 112*s.* 3*d.*, the lowest 52*s.* 1*d.*—a fluctuation of 111 per cent. In 1819, 1820, and 1821, the maximum was 78*s.* 4*d.*, the minimum 46*s.* 2*d.*—giving a fluctuation of eighty-five per cent. In 1822, 1823, and 1824, the highest price was 67*s.* 7*d.*, the lowest 38*s.* 1*d.*—a fluctuation of fifty-six per cent. In 1825, 1826, and 1827, the price ranged from 69*s.* 8*d.* to 49*s.* 2*d.*—showing a fluctuation of forty-four and a-half per cent. He should leave out 1828, the year in which the law had been altered, and proceed to 1829, 1830, and 1831, during which period the highest price of wheat was 75*s.* 11*d.*, and the lowest price 55*s.* 4*d.*; the fluctuation being only thirty-eight per cent, the least of the whole series of years. In 1833 the price ranged between 63*s.* 7*d.* and 51*s.* 1*d.*, showing a fluctuation of but twenty-three and three quarters per cent. Here were strong grounds on which to argue, that the tendency of the Bill of 1828 was to prevent and limit, instead of causing and aggravating, the fluctuations in the price of grain. If he were to apply the same test to the variations in the price of corn from the commencement of the 18th century, the result would be practically the same. He repeated, that were he to take the whole period, beginning at 1701, and dividing it into terms of five years, only two quinquennial periods would be found in which the fluctuations in the price of corn had been less than during the five years that had elapsed since the passing of this Act. Perhaps this did not show that a Corn-law was a good thing, but it at least proved, that the present law was not liable to the charge of aggravating fluctuations, which had been brought against it by his noble friend. He would here remind his noble friend, that one of the principal fluctuations had taken place after the bad harvest of 1828. After these calculations he thought that the law was tried by experience, and that, though it was not to be considered the best in the world, still it was not liable to the charges brought against it by his noble friend. It was not necessary for him to argue on the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th, Resolutions, because their substance was summed up in the 13th Resolution. His noble friend stated, in his 13th Resolution:—"That the manifest effects of the Corn-laws are to leave the agricultural interest exposed to all the difficulties which arise from frequent and sudden fluctuations in price—to discourage the export, and consequently production of British commodities—to increase the cost of cultivating the soil, and of producing the manufactures of the United Kingdom—to render the industry of the nation less capable of competing with that of other nations, and to make the people less competent to support the several burthens, which the various exigences of the State have imposed upon them." That was his noble friend's last Resolution, and the conclusion which he drew from his former statements. But he could not consent seriously to affirm, in a resolution to be recorded on the Journals of this House, that there had been such sudden fluctuations in price as his noble friend here alleged. In one sense, indeed, the fluctuation had been sudden, but the question was, whether there were not other causes to which it might be ascribed—such as the variation of the seasons operating differently in the same year, in different parts of the United Kingdom, rather than the mere effect of a law which, be its defects what they might, could not be proved to have produced it. And then his noble friend, comparing the price here with what would be the price under a new system, said that we could obtain our supplies at 30*s.* per quarter, His noble friend took a very erroneous view of that part of his subject. It was impossible that foreign corn could get to this country at so low a price as 38*s*, per quarter. This was allowed by Mr. Macculloch himself, the Coryphæus of the advocates of free trade in corn. This Gentleman in an elaborate article in his commercial Dictionary admitted, that foreign corn could not be brought here at a less price than 50*s.* In the face of these facts and admissions there were people who talked of a starving population, occasioned by the operation of the present law which admitted corn at an average duty of 6*s.* 8*d.* At present too, the average price of corn was 54*s.* 4*d.*, only 4*s.* higher than the price at which Mr. Macculloch said foreign corn could be imported. Now supposing the duty of be 12*s.* the quarter, it was clear that foreign corn could not find a market here at all. Then his noble friend said, that the effect of the Corn-laws was, to discourage the export, and consequently the production of British commodities; but his noble friend had neither produced nor asked for documents to confirm that statement; and he should shortly prove, that the facts of the case did not bear out his noble friend's assertion. If his noble friend were correct, there ought to appear some great falling-off in our exports to Russia, Denmark, Prussia, the Netherlands, our North American colonies, and the United States, the principal countries from which we imported corn, returning them, of course, our own commodities. But our exports to those countries had gone on increasing since the passing of the Bill of 1828, we getting from them at the same time all the corn we wanted. The exports of British productions to the countries in question, according to the official value amounted in 1828 to 21,235,000*l.*: in 1830 to 24,299,000*l.*; in 1831 to 27,896,000*l.* Here was a falling-off! If to these items our exports of colonial productions, &c. during the same periods, were added, the totals would be found to be 27,430,000*l.*, 29,684,000*l.*, 35,340,000*l.* These facts directly contradicted his noble friend's Resolution. According to the argument of his noble friend a very good harvest would be a very bad thing, for in that case foreign corn would not be required, and of course foreign countries would not take our manufactures. His noble friend alleged that the effect of the Corn-laws was to increase the cost of cultivating the soil, and of producing the manufactures of the United Kingdom. Now he did not very clearly see how that process was brought about by the present system, under which we had had comparatively steady and moderate prices. His noble friend had said a great deal upon the rate of wages caused by the Corn-laws. He was perfectly convinced that the effect of the price of corn on wages was very much exaggerated, and that the fall in wages was to be attributed to many other causes besides. If the question were to be minutely examined into, it would, perhaps, be found that the only effect it had was upon very highly-finished manufactures, and that the amount of that effect was no more than one or two at most per cent. So that upon this point he could not come to the same conclusions with his noble friend. His noble friend had said a great deal about the low rate of profit, but if that were a sign of evil, and the contrary were a sign of prosperity, then no country in the world should be so prosperous as Ireland, where the rate of profit on agricultural capital was highest, and the wages of labour lowest. Another argument the noble Lord had made use of was, a reference to the Poor's-rates, showing their increase in years of high and fluctuating prices in corn. He took the Poor's-rates in Sussex during the years 1816, 1817, and 1818. Very well; if the price of corn had any effect upon them, its effect must have been tremendous during those years when corn was excessively high. In those years there must have been, according to his noble friend's arguments, an aggravated amount of Poor's-rates. Now he would look to the amount of the rates in those years of high prices, and compare it with the rates of the present year, when corn was far from being at so high a price. Of course he took the Poor's-rates of Sussex for those years. In 1816 they amounted to 235,000*l.*; in 1817 to 280,000*l.*; and in 1818, to 267,000*l.* In the year 1832, of course, it would be expected to find the Poor's-rates less in Sussex; whereas, the fact was quite the reverse. The price of corn in 1832 was two-thirds less than in 1818, and yet the Poor's-rates in Sussex for the year 1832, amounted to 284,000*l.*, consequently to more than they were in any of the three years of the highest prices. His noble friend on introducing the question had quoted several authorities. He had done him the honour of mentioning him (Lord Ripon), and also Lord Fitzgerald, and the President of the Board of Control; but his noble friend had entirely overlooked one very high authority on the subject—namely, his noble friend himself—for, in a well written and ingenious pamphlet published by his noble friend, several statements were contained which certainly did not support his present speech. In the pamphlet referred to, his noble friend observed, with respect to the condition of the working classes at various periods, that in 1797 the rate of wages was 7*s.* a-week, and calculating that the excess of wages over the price of two-thirds of a bushel of wheat (the quantity necessary for consumption) was the sum which ministered to the labourer's other wants and comfortable subsistence, he found that in 1797 the price of two-thirds of a bushel of corn was 4*s*. 4*d*. leaving a residue of 2*s*. 8*d*. to the labourer for the purchase of other necessaries, &c. In 1828 wages were 11*s*. a-week; the price of two-thirds of a bushel of wheat was 5*s*.; the difference being 6*s*. Now he would maintain that a working man could buy more necessaries and comforts with 6*s*. in 1828, than he could obtain for 2*s*. 8*d*. in 1797; and, therefore, that so far from his condition being deteriorated by the Corn-laws or any other cause, it was improved. In 1829 the difference between the rate of wages and two-thirds of a bushel of wheat was 5*s*. 6*d*. and in 1833 it was 6*s*. 6*d*. Thus, his noble friend's own pamphlet showed that he was erroneous in ascribing an imaginary depression of the labourer to the Corn-laws. Perhaps he, and those who thought with him on this subject, might be called heartless and rapacious tyrants, oppressors of the people, and enemies to their welfare. He denied the justice of any such accusation. In taking the view which he had done of this question, he was swayed by no mean, he was influenced by no party, motives. He took that course which his judgment pointed out to him as the just and the correct one. He knew that, with respect to this subject, much popular clamour prevailed. Public opinion—true public opinion—he respected; he would give to it his best attention but popular clamour he would resist as long as he had the power of doing so. His sentiments, and the sentiments of those who held the same opinions with himself, might be liable to misrepresentations; but he was well assured that no misrepresentation, that no calumny, that no attempt to hold their Lordships up to public execration, would ever induce them to swerve from the line of their duty.

Lord *Winchilsea* said, that after the very able and convincing speech of the noble Lord who had just sat down, he should not have intruded on their Lordships, were it not for one observation which fell from the noble Earl (Fitzwilliam) affecting the legislative capacity of their Lordships, and the insinuation that they were not competent to treat in a proper manner questions affecting the general interests of the country. For his part he must declare, that on no occasion had he seen their Lordships influenced upon any great public question by selfish considerations. Nothing could be more injurious than a frequent change of those laws which affected the great interests of the nation. The noble Earl, in the course of his speech, seemed entirely to have lost sight of a most important point—the support which the poor derived from the agriculture of the country, and the support which it gave to manufactures. Three-fourths of the manufactures of the towns were consumed by the agricultural part of the population, and to destroy that, therefore, must be most injurious to the manufacturing interest. He never saw greater distress among the manufacturers of this country than when meat was at three-pence the pound and the quarter of corn at forty-two shillings. He would support the Amendment of the noble Earl. They had had experience of the present law for five years, and it was found to work well.

The Earl of *Wicklow* said, that he would not occupy much of the attention of the House after the eloquent speech of the noble Earl. The question for the consideration of their Lordships was, whether they would or would not adopt the theory of the noble Earl (Earl Fitzwilliam) a theory which was embodied in the latter Resolution. As regarded that proposition, he would trust to the arguments of the noble Earl himself to prove its futility. If the theory of the noble Earl were well founded or correct—if it were desirable that this country should have a free trade in corn under certain restrictions—he would ask what would be the consequence to Ireland if a sudden stop were put to the intercourse between the two countries? The result must be an increase of the commercial distress which now existed. He could not indeed avoid expressing his astonishment, that the noble Earl should not, in the course of a long speech, have alluded in any way to Ireland, which formed so considerable a portion of the empire, and the interests of which were so intimately bound up with this question. If the theory of that noble Earl were put into practice, what must be the lamentable effect upon that country, the produce of its soil was its only saleable production? Why, Ireland must of necessity be placed in such a situation as no country in Europe ever had been. Ireland might be considered in relation to England, as Sicily had been to Rome, the great granary of the empire. Now, if the recommendation of the noble Earl were followed, they would drive Ireland into a state of barbarism. The noble Earl concluded by again expressing his surprise, that the noble Earl (Earl Fitzwilliam) should have neglected to mention that country in which he had so many large possessions.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* said, he could not help adverting to one fact mentioned by his noble friend, that went to corroborate and strengthen the case he had endeavoured to establish. His noble friend quoted an account of the distress which prevailed in parts of France, in consequence of the dearness and scarcity of corn; but his noble friend forgot, that that part of France was, at the time, under a similar law to that which existed in this country. This, therefore, could not be urged by his noble friend, with any consistency, as an argument in favour of a Corn-law. There was one other point which he hoped their Lordships would allow him to notice. In the year 1830, there was a remarkable ascension of prices, from the commencement of the year up to the period of harvest. The price began to ascend in the month of February—in the month of April there was a small oscillation of price;—for one or two weeks they rose, and the duty fell. What was the consequence? Between 200,000 and 300,000 quarters of bonded corn were thrown into the markets. The fall of prices was merely temporary — prices began to rise again, and continued to do so until the beginning of harvest. Now, during the whole of the period that prices were rising, no foreign corn was brought into the market; the whole of the bonded corn remained in hand until the price had risen to 75*s.* a quarter, though the duty had before fallen to 2*s.* 8*d.* What was the result? All at once (the price having attained its height), not less than 1,200,000 quarters of corn were poured into the market. Now, during the period that prices were thus gradually rising, this corn was either in bond, or was capable of being imported from abroad. Was it not clear, then, that the dealers in foreign corn had the power to withhold it from the people until the price had risen far beyond what would be a remunerating price to the importer? Had this corn been introduced at an earlier period, the consumers of corn in this country would have been exempted from a rise in the price to 70*s.* and 75*s.* a quarter. That rise of price was an unmixed evil to the consumer, and of no benefit to the farmer; because it was well known, that just previously to harvest the farmer holds very little corn and could not therefore derive any advantage from the advance in price. The noble Earl, who last addressed their Lordships, complained of his having wholly overlooked the consequences which would result to Ireland from an alteration of the Corn-laws. But that noble Earl would give him leave to say, that whatever effect a free trade in corn might have upon the landowners of Ireland, no injury would be sustained by the people of that country from such a measure. The noble Earl would concede that to him, that if there be one benefit which, rather than any other, it was desirable should be conferred upon the people of Ireland, it was that they should cease to be eaters of potatoes, and become eaters of, as well as dealers in, corn. The noble Earl would also give him leave to remark, that diminishing the price of corn in England would not tend to prevent the cultivation of corn in Ireland, because in Ireland that cultivation was exceedingly cheap. Whatever might be predicted of the effect of the measure in England, he had no doubt of this—that, as respected Ireland, corn might be raised in that country at a price which would enable the farmer to compete with any other country in the world. The effect of the measure he recommended, would be, to lower the price of corn; and the consequence of that would be the lowering of rents; but it would not injure the people of Ireland.

The Resolutions were put *seriatim*, and negatived.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, May 14, 1833.

MINUTES.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of Mr. HARLAND, an Account of all Houses Rated at 10*l.* per year, in the years ending 5th April, 1832, and 1833.—On the Motion of Mr. FINN, an Account of the Expenses incurred by making the New Census for Ireland in 1831.—On the Motion of Mr. M. ATTWOOD, a Copy of all Communications made within the last six Months to the Board of Trade in Answer to Inquiries made by that Board regarding the State of the Country, and of particular Towns and Districts; as also Copies of such Inquiries.

Petitions presented. By Mr. DYKES, from Cockermouth, for Poor Laws to Ireland; from Whitehaven, for Vote by Ballot; from Harrington, for Relief from Taxation; from Stockton-upon-Tees, for Relief to the Dissenters; and from Holbrooke and Workington, for a Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By Mr. HUGHES HUGHES, from St. Martin's, Oxford, for a Repeal of the Assessed Taxes.—By Mr. HODGES, from Tonbridge, for a Repeal of the Malt Tax; and also for a Repeal of the Sale of Beer

Bill.—By Mr. J. Oswald, from Glasgow, against the Royal Burgh (Scotland) Bill.—By Mr. Benett, Mr. James Brougham, Mr. Philpotts, Mr. Adams, Major Beauclerk, Mr. Blamire, Mr. Andrew Johnston, Mr. Ayshford Sanford, Mr. Rigby Wason, Lord Viscount Sandon, Mr. E. Petre, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Tancred, Lord Viscount Clive, Sir John D. Astley, Mr. Todd, Mr. Aglionby, Mr. Kemyss Tynte, Mr. Wigney, Sir H. Williamson, Mr. Townley, Captain Dundas, Mr. Houldsworth, Mr. Gladstone, Lord John Russell, Mr. Hume, Earl Grosvenor, Sir G. Staunton, Colonel Wood, Mr. Bish, Mr. More O'Ferral, Mr. Hugh Owen, Mr. C. A. Pelham, the Earl of Ormelie, Sir John Owen, Mr. H. Burton, Mr. Barnard, Mr. Guest, Mr. Plumptre, Mr. Roebuck, Mr. H. Handley, Mr. Labouchere, Admiral Adam, Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Mr. Williams, Mr. T. B. Thompson, Mr. R. Clive, Colonel Perceval, Mr. Hill, Mr. Methuen, Lord Viscount Cole, Mr. Divett, Sir John Wrottesley, Mr. Hawes, Lord Cavendish, Mr. O'Connell, Lord Charles Russell, Mr. Wedgwood, Mr. Lester, Mr. William Denison, Mr. J. W. Scott, Mr. F. Shaw, Colonel Evans, the Solicitor-General, Mr. John Romilly, Mr. Robert Gordon, Mr. Alderman Wood, Sir Francis Vincent, Mr. Walter, Lord Tullamore, Dr. Lushington, Mr. Fowell Buxton, and Mr. Stanley, from a very great Number of Places, —against Slavery.

MINISTERIAL PROPOSITION FOR THE EMANCIPATION OF SLAVES.] The Order of the Day for the House to resolve itself into a Committee to consider the subject of Slavery having been read, the House resolved itself on the Motion of Mr. Secretary Stanley, into a Committee.

Mr. Secretary *Stanley* rose, and spoke nearly as follows:—Sir, I am confident when I state to the House, that if ever a Minister of the Crown, in bringing forward any measure on behalf of the Government to which he belonged—more especially affecting a question of such vital import as this—one which touches so directly and immediately the interests of many, and, I may say, commands the attention of all—I say, Sir, if ever a member of this House, or Minister of the Crown, had a fair claim on the kindness and indulgence of those about him, that claim I can now honestly make, assured that what I ask will not be refused; and the more confident I am in advancing it, from the circumstance which is well known to all, of the very short period which has elapsed since I have been called upon to act as the organ of Government in this situation, and from my having, during that brief and limited period, to discharge the duties of an office, one of the many of which is connected with this question of unparalleled importance—involving a greater amount of property—affecting the happiness and the well-being of a larger portion of individuals, than was ever before brought forward, and which to mature and bring successfully to a conclusion, is now rendered peculiarly difficult by the time, and from the circumstances under which it is introduced. Sir, I feel most anxious on account of the responsibility which devolves upon me. I feel not only, that our maritime commerce is here concerned—that 250,000 tons of British shipping are affected—not only that a revenue of 5,000,000*l.* is to be dealt with and legislated for; but I feel, that if possible, higher interests are involved—that the interests, the comforts, the prosperity, perhaps I might say the very existence, of a large population in the West-India colonies depending upon us for support and protection, hang upon the decision of those Resolutions which it will be my duty to submit to the House. Nay, Sir, I cannot narrow the question even to this—I cannot deny to myself, that the happiness of the descendants of those for whom I now propose to legislate—that generations yet unborn are to be affected for good or for evil by the course which this House may think proper to adopt. Nor can I conceal from myself, or from this House, the immense influence on the population of foreign countries which must arise from the result of the mighty experiment which we now propose to make. On that may depend the welfare of millions of men in a state of slavery in colonies not belonging to Great Britain. Besides all these things, there is enough to make any man—the strongest, the boldest, and the best—shrink in some degree under the weight of so great a responsibility; for the question is now in such a state, that deal with it as you will, you can only have a choice of difficulties. Those difficulties, I assert, are all but insurmountable. They leave us only the choice of doing some good at the least risk of effecting evil. We are called upon to legislate between two conflicting parties—one deeply involved by pecuniary interests—involved, moreover, in difficulties of the most pressing character—difficulties which are now present, and are constantly increasing; the other deeply involved by their feelings and their opinions, representing a growing determination on the part of the people of this country to put an end to slavery, which no one can deny or wisely despise—a determination the more absolute, and the less resistible, because founded in sincere religious feelings, and in a solemn conviction that things wrong in principle cannot be good in practice; and that determination is expressed in a voice so potential, that no Minister can venture to disregard it. The time is, indeed, gone by when the question can be for a moment entertained whether or not this system can be made perpetual; the only point we can discuss—the only point we shall discuss is the safest, speediest, happiest way in which to effect its final and entire abolition. And let me say, that they who characterize this as a mere ebullition of popular feeling—as transient in its character—as fleeting or unsubstantial—the mere expression of yesterday—are but deceiving themselves; for it is not of late or of momentary birth, but springs from the deep-settled and long-entertained convictions of reflecting men—from that same spirit of lasting humanity, which, fifty years ago, pressed on the Parliament of that day; and which, in defiance of the arguments, that we should ruin our trade —in defiance of opposition from many quarters—compelled the Parliament to abolish for ever that iniquitous and disgraceful trade by which supplies of human flesh were obtained from the shores of Africa. If there are, Sir, any persons who can doubt that the authors of that politic and humane and just abolition looked forward to the emancipation of the slaves as the consequence of abolishing the Slave Trade, I would beg leave to refer them to the speeches of the most distinguished advocates of that humane measure. Sir, when we look back to the language of the great men who introduced that measure into Parliament, and who so zealously laboured for the accomplishment of that object, which they at length almost achieved, leaving little for those to do who actually accomplished it, we find that, although the two questions were carefully separated at the time, the gradual abolition of slavery remained upon their minds, and was distinguishable in the expression of their feelings in the debates of that day, as necessarily and inseparably connected with that preliminary step of the abolition of the slave-trade. The House will forgive me if I call its attention to the remarkable expressions of no undistinguished man, who, in the language of Mr. Canning, attacked only the outworks of the great fortress, but who undoubtedly looked forward with a firm conviction, that the destruction of those outworks would cause the ultimate fall of the fortress itself. So long ago as the year 1792 (and then, with an apology for his plan having remained unmatured and unexhibited to the public for twelve years) Mr. Burke, in his celebrated letter to Mr. Dundas, disclosed his plan for what he called a Negro Code, and said 'that he 'was convinced the true origin of the 'slave trade was not in the place it began 'at, but in the place of its final destination;' he then said, 'I was, therefore, and still 'am of opinion, that the whole work 'ought to be taken up together, and that 'the gradual abolition of slavery in the 'West-Indies should go hand in hand 'with any thing which is done to put a 'stop to the supply of negroes from the 'coast of Africa.' Together with this letter, Mr. Burke inclosed his Negro Code, embracing regulations for trade, and containing provisions for putting an end to the system of slavery in the colonies. The preamble is so remarkable that he would beg to trouble the House with it. The preamble began by saying, 'whereas 'it is expedient, and conformable to the 'principles of the Christian religion, the 'dictates of morality, and the rules of 'sound policy, that an end should be 'put to all traffic in the persons of men, 'and to the detention of such persons in 'slavery, as soon as the same can be 'effected without great inconveniences 'from a sudden change of practices long 'established; and during the continuance 'of those practices, it is desirable to introduce some regulations to lessen the 'inconveniences of such traffic and detention in servitude, until both can gradually 'be done away with,&c.' Mr. Fox and Mr. Wilberforce, in this House, and Lord Grenville, in the other House of Parliament, in 1806 and 1807, while they distinctly declared, that the two questions were separate, and that their object at that time was nothing more than the abolition of the trade in slaves; yet in all they said, they evidently looked with confidence to a period when that supply having ceased, slavery itself should be abolished. Mr. Fox said, "that, the abolition of the slave-trade would lead to the abolition of slavery altogether in the West-Indies.*" Mr. Wilberforce said, that 'he wished for nothing then beyond the 'abolition of the slave-trade; but that 'when time and the concurrence of other 'Powers should render it practicable, he

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* Hansard vol. vii. p. 603.

'did not hesitate to say, that slavery ought 'to cease to exist amongst the institutions 'of civilized nations.' Lord Grenville observed, 'that in all history the progress 'from slavery to liberty was effected by 'the slaves becoming predial or attached 'to the land; because where they were 'rendered labourers rather than slaves, 'they felt an interest in the prosperity of 'their country; and he was sure, that to 'give the West-India slaves an interest in 'the tranquillity and defence of those 'islands would ensure their confidence, 'loyalty, and attachment.' I trouble the House with these extracts to prove that the feeling which now pervades the country is not of this day's growth; but that the people of this country have long considered it expedient—have long held it a duty, on the ground of religion and of justice, to advance any measure which might tend to the early abolition of this disgraceful system. The nation have now loudly, and for a length of time declared that the disgrace of slavery should not be suffered to remain part of our national system. Parliament has, at various times, though perhaps in mitigated terms, confirmed this principle; some times looking to a more remote, and at others to a more immediate period, for the abolition of the system. In 1823, when certain Resolutions were moved by the hon. member for Weymouth, Mr. Canning, in the name of the Government of that day, proposed an Amendment, and that Amendment forms a part, though no very large part, of the Resolutions to be proposed to the House this night. The Resolutions adopted on that occasion received the unanimous support of the House; and the House looked forward to the adoption, on the part of the colonists, of certain ameliorating measures which would, in time, put a final term to the system of slavery. It was the confident expectation of the House, that measures would be concerted by the Colonial Legislatures, which should carry into effect the wishes of Parliament. It was thought, that the friendly warning of Parliament would be sufficient to induce the colonists to attend to its wishes. That warning, however—that admonitory voice—has gone forth, and for years and years been, I am sorry to say, unheeded and disregarded by all the Colonial Legislatures; they have allowed it to be lost upon them—they have done nothing to further and accomplish that great measure, which the mother country eleven years ago, declared to be so just and so desired. But the voice of warning has been found to speak in vain—the tongue of honest and affectionate counsel has not been heeded. I will not deny, that if we look to the measures agreed upon by the Colonial Legislatures since the period I have alluded to, some improvements may be found in points affecting the physical condition of the slaves; but I do assert boldly, and without fear of contradiction even from themselves, that nothing has been done of that nature, extent, or character, which may fairly be characterized as a step towards the ultimate extermination of the system. I therefore now call on the House to take the matter at once into its own hands. It is important to bear in mind, that without the co-operation of the Colonial Legislatures, acting on what Mr. Burke emphatically called the "executory principle," it is idle to seek for the termination of the system of slavery, unless through the means of the Home Legislature. The words of Mr. Burke were these;—"I have seen," said he, speaking in 1792, "what the Colonial Legislatures have done (in reference to the improvement of the condition of the negro) —it is arrant trifling—they have done little, and that little is good for nothing, because it does not carry with it the executory principle?" Now, Sir, it will be my duty to show — and I will clearly show it, though at some hazard of tiring the House, that up to this day, every measure resolved upon by the Colonial Legislatures has been utterly destitute of this principle—utterly destitute of any thing like an executory provision—and destitute of any thing which might give to their enactments the remotest possibility of being calculated to work out the freedom of a single slave. In 1823, Lord Bathurst forwarded to those islands directly governed by this country certain directions, which pointed out several modifications desirable to be adopted as the ground-work for an altered state of society, They were intended, by a gradual alteration in the domestic habits of the slaves, to bring about the total abolition of slavery, and the conversion of the negroes into free labourers. The main principles were the abolition of Sunday labour and Sunday markets, constituting the sacredness of the marriage contract, the placing restrictions on the punishment of the slaves, the establishment of Savings Banks, and other regulations calculated to prepare the slave for that station and the performance of those duties and obligations which civilized life imposes. The Resolutions of 1823 were followed up by an Order in Council in 1824, which provided for the establishment of a protector of slaves, specified the right of the negroes to possess property under certain conditions, prohibited Sunday labour, and gave a right to the slave, under certain restrictions, to obtain his manumission, even against the consent of his master. These Regulations were conveyed to the Crown Colonies by an Order in Council in 1824; they were immediately put into operation in those colonies, and remained in force until subsequently altered by another Order in Council in 1830. But how were these salutary and humane provisions received by the Colonial Legislatures in 1824? Without one single exception, they were unanimously rejected by every colony having a legislative assembly of its own. Not one legislative colony but scornfully rejected and disdainfully refused to obey the suggestions and determinations of Parliament and the mother-country. In 1826, we find Mr. Canning using in this House language of the deepest regret—of the deepest anxiety—and I will add, of the deepest indignation—at the continued opposition that was offered by the colonies to the will of the Home Legislature. He stated what had been done by the Colonial Legislatures, in forwarding the recommendations of this House, up to the time that he was speaking; and then added—‘he did not state this as a satisfactory result of the measures proposed in 1823, and directed to be put in force by the Order in Council in 1824, far from it—he stated it, because the point that was then under discussion was, whether the time was yet come when the resistance of the colonies to the wishes of Parliament was to be considered as so contumacious as to make it necessary to adopt a different course with respect to them. The question, in fact was, how far the Parliament of England had the right to legislate for the colonies.’ Mr. Canning, dissatisfied as he was with the result of the measures of 1823 and 1824, did not adopt a harsh tone—he did not call upon Parliament immediately to adopt such measures as would bring the “contumacious opposition” of the Colonial Legislatures to the test;—on the contrary, he begged for time—for “a respite,” as he called it, to allow the colonies to reconsider their refusal, and to call to mind the position in which they were placing themselves, with respect to this country, by their constant interposition between the wishes of the Legislature here, and the well-being of the population whose condition had become a matter of so much interest at home; he, therefore, begged for time, as a test of the sincerity of the Colonial Legislatures, to carry the determinations of Parliament into effect; and, to promote this end, he proposed that certain drafts of Bills should be sent out to them for their adoption. Mr. Canning, however, agreed with the hon. member for Weymouth, that when the respite which he proposed had expired, if the contumacy of the colonies continued, it would then be the duty of Parliament to take the matter out of the hands of their local legislatures, and to deal with them in a more direct and a more authoritative manner. Mr. Canning had previously pointed out the course to be adopted. He said in 1824: ‘There are three possible modes in which Parliament might deal with the people of Jamaica; first, as I have said, it might crush them by the application of direct force; secondly, it might harass them by fiscal regulations and enactments restraining their navigation; and, thirdly, it may pursue the slow and silent course of temperate, but authoritative admonition. Now, Mr. Speaker, if I am asked which course I would advise, I am for first trying that which I have last mentioned; I trust we shall never be driven to the second; and with respect to the first I will only now say, that no feeling of wounded pride, no motive of questionable expediency, nothing short of real and demonstratable necessity, shall induce me to moot the awful question of the transcendental power of Parliament over every dependency of the British Crown. That transcendental power is an *arcanum* of empire, which ought to be kept back within the *penetralia* of the Constitution. It exists, but it should be veiled. It should not be produced upon trifling occasions, or in cases of petty refractoriness and temporary misconduct. It should be brought forward only in the utmost ex-

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[*] Hansard (new series) xiv. p. 977.

'tremity of the State, where other remedies 'have failed to stay the raging of some 'moral or political pestilence.'* In conformity with these views, eight Bills were sent to the Colonial Legislatures by the authority of the Secretary of State. What has been the result? Not a single colony has condescended to adopt a single Bill out of the whole eight; and the colonial Legislatures raised their voices in lofty indignation at our interference in what they declared to be their exclusive business and concern. This took place in 1826: I am now addressing Parliament in 1833; and up to this hour the voice neither of friendly expostulation nor of authority has produced the desired effect upon the Colonial Legislatures—not a single step has been taken by any of them with a view to the extinction of negro slavery. Undoubtedly some of the colonies have been engaged on plans—or rather shadows and outlines of plans; but none of them have been founded in truth or justice, least of all on those recommendations forwarded from the Government at home. But with regard to any real effort—to any substantial improvement—to that which could alone lead to any substantial and positive improvement—to the institution of an officer as protector of the slaves—an officer appointed by the Crown—really and truly their guardian and counsel—one independent of the planters—of all local influence, and all local friendship—in no one colony has such a thing been attempted—in no one colony, Sir, has this efficient protector been appointed. Undoubtedly there have been Councils of Protection—any two Magistrates might act as a Council of Protection. Means have been afforded of facilitating the acquisition of legal rights; but to whom have the trusts in such cases been delegated? To those who have an interest in suppressing slavery? No, but to those who are themselves the possessors of slaves, and who have an unequivocal interest in the existence of slavery, and who are involved in the feelings and prejudices of the Colonial Legislatures. It may be said, that this is compliance. So it is—but it is a species of compliance worse than a mockery. It gives the shadow, but lets slip the substance; and it is only done to afford a pretext for saying "You have no right to interfere: we have not exactly appointed protectors of slaves, but we have put the slaves under protection in reality as effectual and as advantageous." I must admit with regard to the observance of the Sabbath and Sunday markets, that the Colonial Legislatures have shown greater readiness to comply with the wishes of Parliament than on any other point. They are yet, however, far from having done what is necessary; but there is hardly a colony that has not done something towards the establishment of Sunday markets and the abolition of Sunday labour. As to punishments, it is impossible on the present occasion for me to go in detail into the Colonial enactments, and into the deficiencies of those enactments; but if any Gentleman will take the trouble to compare what has been done with what has not been done, he will see how far the Local Legislatures are behind the recommendations of the mother country as respects domestic punishments. The Order in Council directs that no more than a certain number of lashes shall be inflicted, that females shall not be flogged, that witnesses shall be present at the infliction, and that the dates, times, and circumstances, shall be sent to the protector of slaves, and by him sent to the Governor. But if there were any sincere corresponding desire, what, in manliness and in humanity, should be the first step, against which no voice would be raised—that of the abolition of punishment of females. But what will the Committee think of the readiness of the Colonial Legislatures (I speak, God knows, not in bitterness but in sorrow), when I say, that up to this hour no one colony has abolished the practice of inflicting corporal punishment upon females. They have, indeed, in some degree, restrained it; but by restraining they recognize the principle: they have guarded against indecency, but they have not yet carried into effect that which in all the nations of the world has been the first step towards civilization—the raising the female sex from a state of degradation to that of equality and a sense of delicacy. Talk of preparing the slave for freedom! of ripening his moral faculties, to render him capable of enjoying it, and yet show him that all his dearest and domestic ties may be violated—that his wife, his daughter, or his sister, may be subjected to corporal punishment at the pleasure of an overseer—it is a mockery and an insult! But there are limitations as to the number of stripes in Jamaica, and I take the example of Jamaica as fair to all the rest. Thirty-nine stripes, and not more, may be given, on the authority of the overseer or owner, to any slave on any one day. And for what, let me ask? A slave proprietor, who was examined before the Committee last year (I forget his name), told us that if a slave only looked his master in the face, he might order him to receive thirty-nine lashes. Is this the way to teach him to respect law, and prepare him for the immunities of a free man? Is it thus he is to be raised to a level with other men? In 1826, Mr. Canning, talking of the dignity of man quoted the lines—

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* Hansard (new series) x. p. 1106.

> ——— "cælumque tueri
> Jussit, et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus."

But how can you tell the negroe that he shall look up as a free man—but can you talk of hopes, encouragement—preparation for individual freedom, and general emancipation, when even at this moment the slave dares not raise his eyes to his master's face without the risk of receiving thirty-nine lashes? I do not speak of the actual exercise of any such power—I do not believe it could be exercised—but that such a power exists there can be no doubt. In case of unjust infliction, the slave must go before two Magistrates, themselves slave-masters; and if he can persuade them to believe him, the master is to be prosecuted, and if found guilty by a Jury, subjected to fine and imprisonment; but if the Magistrates think the evidence insufficient, without any malicious motive on the part of the slave, he is to be subjected to a second flogging for having made the complaint. This is the practical working in Jamaica of the law in favour of the slave. But there is a further punishment:—in case aggravated, overwhelming cruelty, be proved against a master, if a Jury find that it has been atrocious, then an addition is to be made to the fine and imprisonment; and what is it? That the slave may be sold, and the money handed over to the criminal master. This is the punishment inflicted on masters in Jamaica for conduct which is called atrocious. Another most important consideration is property. The Order in Council specifies that all the property of slaves, excepting in slaves, arms, or amunition, shall be held sacred. What have the Local Legislatures done? They have, indeed, recognised the right of property in the slave, but they have fenced it round with all sorts of limitations and restrictions, so as to render it ineffectual and nugatory. I omitted one point on which the colonists have shown a degree of consent—I allude to the institution of marriage. Objections have been removed: but as I can see there has been no discouragement of a different course either on the part of the Legislature or the planters, no means have been taken to impress on the minds of the slaves the sanctity of the ceremony, or the sacredness of the obligation. A little has been done to remove formal and local obstacles, and to allow marriages to be contracted; but they are subject to the will of the owner, and in some cases a certificate of a clergyman of the Church of England, or of a Dissenting Minister, is also necessary. I will now advert to the point of slave evidence. Perhaps, in going through these points, the House thinks I am entering more at length into the subject than is requisite; but when I am recommending to Parliament to take a step of so much importance, I feel it my duty to show, that all these local enactments have more of shadow than substance, and that there has been little or no disposition to fill up the outline chalked out by the mother country. What says the Order in Council as to slave evidence? It lays down this broad and intelligible principle—that on account of his servile condition, no man shall be disqualified from giving evidence in a Court of Justice; that the slave, like an infant, may be subjected to an examination of his competency, and of his understanding of the obligation of an oath, but the onus of proving his incompetence shall rest on the party objecting to his testimony. How has this been acted upon? Slave evidence has been restricted by requiring the certificate of the master, and sometimes of a clergyman; and this extraordinary principle has been adopted in the colonies: that, after all restrictions and limitations—when it has been shown that the slave is competent to take an oath—that he understands the nature of the obligation, and that he is a man of good character, still his evidence shall be of no avail, excepting against a slave. In some colonies it is held not good against his owner; in others, not good in any capital case that affects the life of a white man. But if his testimony is to be taken in a case affecting the life of a black man, let me ask, why is it not to be taken in a case affecting the life of a white man? Why are the colonists to be allowed to give this damning proof of their partialities and prejudices, that a negro may be taken to the scaffold on evidence which would not be admitted against a white man in a civil action. There is, however, one exception, proving most strongly that which is the invariable rule, and establishes the jealousy and prejudices that actuate the legislation of the colonies. It is this: That the evidence of a negro shall be received against a white accomplice. If a white degrade himself below his caste by mixing with negroes, and committing crimes in concert with them, he is deprived of his privilege, and may be convicted on the testimony of his black associates. The last point to which I shall refer is the principle of manumission, by which the negro, though in a state of suffering, shall not be in a state of despair—by which he may look forward to his liberation, to that time when standing upright in the possession of freedom, he may take his place among his fellow men. That principle of manumission is distinctly recognized in the Order in Council: even against the will of the master the slave may obtain his freedom—an appraisement by competent persons may take place; and, upon payment of a certain sum, to be settled by arbitration, the slave may be restored to the inestimable blessings of liberty. All the colonies may say, that they have passed laws favouring manumission—that they have removed legal difficulties—and that there is a case where the slave, having paid the stipulated price, may obtain the right to his own body. I admit that they have removed some obstacles; but in no colony, with the single exception of the Bahamas, has the slave acquired a right to go to his master, and, tendering his price, say: "I am no longer a slave—I am a free man." In every other instance, the power of refusal rests with the masters. I have now gone through the various heads included in the Orders in Council of 1824—in the speech of Mr. Canning in 1826, when he put the Colonial Legislatures to the test—in the circulars of Sir George Murray in 1828, which have been entirely disregarded—and in the Order in Council of 1830, which has not been carried into effect in a single colony. I have detailed the parliamentary proceedings, and the measures of Colonial Legislation; and I leave it to the House to form its own judgment how far reliance can be placed on the Legislative Assemblies, that—I will not say in the present, but in any future generation—the wishes and determination of this country, as regards slaves, will be carried into effect. If, then, there be a case in which the intervention of Parliament can be justified—in which it can be imperiously called upon to exercise the power and authority which belongs to it—surely it is this case, in which all means have been exhausted—every suggestion made—every warning given, but given only in vain. All attempts in this country have been met by the most determined opposition. I hold in my hand a passage, from a speech delivered by Mr. Canning in 1799, which, long as it is, I shall take the liberty of reading, because it shows how naturally and how strongly the ardent feelings of his mind were then directed to this subject, which afterwards occupied his most anxious thoughts when he became the great ornament of the Senate. I feel fully persuaded that the House will not think I am wasting its time. It was delivered in reply to Sir William Young, in a debate on the subject of the slave trade; and I entreat the House, in following me, to substitute for slave trade the system of slavery, and every syllable will be applicable to the present condition of the question:—'The question 'is, whether, in what is to be done to'wards alleviating and finally extinguish'ing the horrors of the slave trade, the 'proper agent was the British House of 'Commons, or the Colonial Assemblies? 'The hon. Baronet contended that the 'Colonial Assemblies, and not the British 'House of Commons, were the agents 'most proper to be employed. But what 'was the hon. Baronet's argument? "Trust 'not the masters of slaves in what con'cerns legislation for slavery! However 'specious their laws may appear, depend 'upon it they must be ineffectual in their 'application. It is in the nature of things 'that they should be so." Granted. Let 'then the British House of Commons do 'their part themselves! Let them not 'delegate the trust of doing it to those 'who, according to the hon. Baronet's 'testimony, cannot execute that trust 'fairly. Let the evils of the slave trade 'be remedied by an assembly of freemen, 'by the Government of a free people, and 'not by those whom the hon. Baronet re-

'presents as utterly unqualified for the 'undertaking—not by the masters of 'slaves! Their laws, the hon. Baronet 'had avowed, could never reach, would 'never cure, the evil. So that, according 'to the hon. Baronet's argument, if there 'had even been no doubt upon the face of 'the papers upon the Table, of the sincere 'intention of the Colonial Assemblies to 'carry the wishes of this country into 'effect; if there had been no doubt that 'the termination of the trade was the object to which the regulations (such as 'they may be) were intended; if there had 'been no doubt that these regulations were 'in fact calculated for the purpose; if the 'Assembly of Jamaica had professed as 'distinctly its anxiety to terminate the 'trade, as in point of fact it had expressed 'its resolution to continue it; still, according to the hon. Baronet's argument, no 'trust could be reposed in these appearances and professions. There was something in the nature of absolute authority 'in the relation between master and slave, 'which made despotism, in all cases, and 'under all circumstances, an incompetent 'and unsure executor even of its own provisions in favour of the objects of its 'power.' As I before remarked, let any Gentleman substitute "Abolition of Slavery" for "Abolition of the Slave Trade;" and there is not an argument advanced by Mr. Canning, in 1799, that may not be used with double force now, to justify the interference of Parliament, if it ever had the right to interfere, in order to carry into effect objects so dearly prized, and of such vast importance. I do not pretend to enter into that nice discussion, or to argue that grave constitutional question which affects to settle where the power of Parliament over Colonial Assemblies terminates. Except by the authority of Parliament itself, I know of no such termination; and if there be those who vindicate the right of Colonial Assemblies to set themselves in opposition to the laws, regulations, and avowed determinations of Parliament, I call upon them to show in the characters of those Assemblies, as well as in reason and argument, how it is possible that a delegated authority should exceed the authority of the body from which it is derived. In 1778, undoubtedly, Parliament passed that Declaratory Act which limited its own power: it did so then, not denying or abandoning its right, but waiving it, and declaring that in the single case of internal taxation, Parliament would not make a claim on those colonies which had assemblies of their own. The right of regulating matters of trade no man will deny; but on the right of interfering with, or of making internal regulations, some hon. Members may raise a doubt. I know not when that right of internal regulation was abandoned, or by what authority the legislature of a dependent colony can declare itself independent of the Legislature of the mother country. Let us however look to precedents. In 1700, I find an Act on the subject of piracy, which authorizes the King to issue Special Commissions for the trial of piracies within the colonial seas, which gives exclusive power to a particular jurisdiction, and supersedes the authority of the local tribunal; and the penalty for denying the right to make this law is the forfeiture of the charter of the colony. In 1732, there was a still more memorable example, having a direct and immediate bearing, not only on the principle, but on the subject matter of this discussion. In that year, the merchants trading to the colonies presented a petition, complaining that in Virginia and Jamaica the privilege was claimed to exempt lands and negroes, in certain cases, from being seized in execution for debt. What did the Parliament of that day do? The Board of Trade reported that the assemblies of those colonies could not be induced to divest themselves, by any act of their own, of the privilege they possessed; accordingly an Act was passed, the 5th Geo. 2nd, c. 7, by which all lands, houses, and negroes on plantations, are declared assets for the payment of debts. But there is one authority, to which, on this topic, I am permitted to appeal, because at all events it will be unsuspected. It is not an English but an American authority; that of Mr. Otis, who, in 1765, was at the head of a large body of his countrymen, and was officially deputed by Massachusets to resist encroachments on the local Legislature: among other things he laid it down distinctly, that "the mother country justly asserts her right to bind her colonies where she thinks it necessary, and she remains the supreme judge, from whose final determination there is no appeal." I say that on this question, if Parliament does not interfere, there is no hope of bringing it to a final issue. It has been very frequently stated, more particularly on the part of the West India body, that there really is no just and substantial ground of complaint; that no case has been made out for interference in any way, and least of all an imperious necessity for legislation. "If (say they) you only leave the colonies alone all will go well, all will be happy: all our difficulties and distresses are the necessary and inevitable consequences of your interposition, and of that perpetual agitation which injures the title to property, and reduces the profits." No man is more sensible than I am of the depth of distress prevailing in the West Indies, or of the strong colours (I do not say more strong than true) in which the Colonial Legislatures have painted the condition of the planters. I hold in my hand a declaration of theirs, which points out the extreme distress and embarrassment of the West Indies, from which I beg to read a short extract. Such is the language of persons speaking of the state of their own property, and I do not doubt the truth of the statement; but I will ask the House to consider under what circumstances, and at what time, this frightful exhibition of utter ruin has been made? Is it of the year 1813 that I am drawing this picture? Is it of the year 1807, when some attempts were made to alleviate? No, but of the high and palmy days of what is called the West-India interest; of the high and palmy days of the slave trade, in the year 1804, and not when, according to the House of Assembly in Jamaica, the fanatical agitation of the question in Parliament had imparted a taint to West-India property. That property, to which it would seem that no injury had ever occurred, antecedently to the celebrated proceedings in the year 1823, although it is a matter of the most perfect notoriety that West-India property had been at all times before liable to sudden and extreme fluctuations, arising from the recklessness with which men were ever ready to embark capital upon that most hazardous species of speculation, and for which, at various periods, many of them have most dearly paid. If I find it necessary before I proceed further to call the attention of the House to a few statements, which I fear will prove dry and uninteresting, I trust I may be borne with, for I shall endeavour to avoid as much as possible anything which does not appear to be of the highest importance. In the year 1803, it was stated, that it was impossible to continue the cultivation of sugar; and in that year the export of sugar from the West-India colonies amounted to 1,430,000 cwts.; but what happened subsequently? Why the cultivation was continually increased, and, in the year 1831, it had advanced to 3,787,000 cwts. The distress of the colonists may be traced to one plain and undeniable cause—they have overstocked the market. Though they possess the undisputed monopoly of the markets of this country, they have gone on increasing the extent of their produce until they have far outdone the demand for sugar in the markets of Europe. The quantity of sugar now imported annually into this country exceeds the demand by 1,000,000 cwt., and the consequence necessarily is, that the monopoly is practically and in effect a dead letter. The price of their produce in our markets is determined by the price they can obtain for the surplus abroad. Now, that is surely a state of things not arising from any proceedings in this House, or in this country; and there is nothing can be done to relieve the West-India interest in a commercial or trading point of view, otherwise than by reducing the amount of sugar produced, or by calling into existence fresh markets for its consumption, so that the demand shall come fully up to the supply. New land has been brought into cultivation; new colonies have been added to our possessions; the cultivators of the old land have been compelled to adopt new and improved modes of increasing the productive powers of their estates, and all for the purpose of contributing to swell that vast amount of excessive production which, beyond all dispute, is the great source of the present difficulties of the West-India interest. The owners of property in the West-Indies proceed with enterprises not warranted by the circumstances of the colonies, or the demand for sugar in the European markets; they find themselves involved in difficulties, and they seek to escape from those difficulties by means which only involve them in fresh entanglements; and then they turn round and impute all the blame to what they call the fanatical proceedings which it is said had their origin in this House in the year 1823. I have not the slightest difficulty in saying, that those difficulties have not been occasioned by the efforts to get rid of slavery, but by the ill-judged efforts to push it to extremity. The existing condition of the West-India planters has been brought on, not by the efforts of those who sought to get rid of slavery, nor perhaps by the will of the planters of the present age themselves; but by a concurrence of untoward circumstances and unwise counsels, for which no set of men now alive can be held responsible. I will suppose, that the agitation so often referred to has been the cause of the present state of things in the colonies; and now I ask, what can we do to remove that cause—what is the remedy? It is very easy to say we will exclude, or we might have excluded, all knowledge of those proceedings from the colonies. I I say you could have done no such thing, and still less can you do it for the future. You cannot prevent the voice of the people from being heard within these walls, and you cannot prevent the sound of what passes here from reaching the colonies—it will not only reach the colonies, but it will reach the slaves themselves, aggravated by the incautious comments of those who may become the medium of communicating it to the negro population of the West-Indies. I repeat it, that if you wish to stop the progress of this species of information; it is out of your power. The only course left to you is to advance. The only dangerous course is happily impracticable — you cannot recede — you cannot stand still. It has been said, that " the best mode of avoiding danger is to face it. I say that in this case the only possible mode of coping with the danger, so as to afford the smallest chance of safety, is by manfully grappling with it in front. Various objections have been raised to measures founded upon propositions for ameliorating the condition of the slaves, and the strongest apprehensions have been expressed lest we should proceed with steps too hasty and upon data not carefully examined; it is said, that you must render the slave fit for freedom before you offer him emancipation, otherwise you entail nothing but misery upon the negro, and ruin upon the planter. We are told, too, that the effect of such a proceeding will necessarily be to cause a great diminution in the amount of production, that it will be absolutely impracticable to cultivate sugar, that the colonies must be thrown up, and that nothing but ruin will ensue. Sir, so far as the amount of the production of sugar, is concerned, I am not quite certain that to some extent a diminution of that production would be matter of regret—I am not quite certain, that it might not be for the benefit of the planters and of the colonies themselves, in the end, if that production were in some degree diminished. But the question for the consideration of the House is, will you, with the statement which I shall have the honour of laying before you—will you, looking to that statement supported by facts and figures alone—will you encourage and defend the system by which the present extent and amount of production are maintained? Up to the present moment, I purposely abstained from adverting to particular cases, for I thought that reference to facts affecting individuals could lead to nothing beneficial, and might be productive of that heat and irritation which it should be our earnest desire to avoid. I trust, therefore, that by those who may follow me, similar abstinence may be practised, and that in the course of such discussion as the present measure may give rise to, we shall escape anything of that painful and profitless species of disputation which none but the enemies of the colonies and human nature would desire to see prevailing. If for a moment I should seem to depart from that rule which I have prescribed, it will, I assure the House, be so only in appearance; my earnest and sincere desire being to avoid every thing having the slightest tendency towards irritation. I have now in my possession a variety of papers, to the results of which I will proceed to call the attention of the House, on the subject of the quantities of sugar produced during three several periods of three years each—its effect upon population during those periods—and the mode of exacting the labour by which the sugar was produced. Before I can conclude these statements, I do think the House will agree with me, that the time has arrived when humanity compels us to step in and decisively pronounce that the hours of labour for the negro must be diminished. The particulars with which I have been furnished are from the Official Triennial Register, and from other sources of the highest authenticity. They shew the increase or decrease of slaves in the colony, and in them allowance is made for every case of manumission and of importation. From these documents, I think nothing can be more evident than that, in proportion as the cultivation of sugar has increased, men have declined; and to this general rule there are but two exceptions. In Jamaica, from the year 1823 to 1826, onwards to 1832, we find, dividing the nine years in three several periods, that in the first period in that colony, the production of sugar was 1,354,488 cwt.; and in the second period, the production was 1,389,000 cwt. The mean population of the first period was 334,000; in the second it fell off to 327,000. In Demerara, the production of sugar in the first period was 652,000 cwt.; in the second, 662,000 cwt.; in the third, 806,000 cwt.; and what was the diminution of the slave population during those three periods? In the first, on the average of the three years, the slaves were 72,722; in the second, 71,005; in the third, 67,741. In the latter period, 67,000 slaves were made to produce 800,000 cwt. of sugar, while in the former, it required 72,700 slaves to produce 650,000 cwt. In Berbice the population of slaves was reduced from 22,000, which it was in the first of those periods, to 21,246 in the second, and to 20,821 in the last, while sugar went on increasing in this proportion—In the first period it was 58,600 cwt.; in the second, 64,000 cwt.; and in the third, with a declining population, it was augmented to the fearful amount of 94,312 cwt.; in St. Lucia, the population, during the first period, amounted to 13,909; in the second, to 13,860; and in the third, to 13,687. The production of sugar amounted, in the first period, to 77,976 cwt.; in the second, to 87,410 cwt.; and in the third, to 88,778 cwt. Thus invariably, with two single exceptions, in these colonies we find, while the slave population is fast decreasing, the production of sugar is increasing to a very considerable extent. One of the exceptions was Trinidad. There has been in that colony a trifling increase in population as well as in production; but at the same time it is to be borne in mind, that many negroes have been brought into that colony as free labourers from the Spanish Main. Barbadoes formed another exception: there, in the first period, the production of sugar was 32,000 cwt.; and in the second it had fallen down to 29,000 cwt., while the slave population had advanced from 79,800 to 81,349. These statements are dry, I am aware; but they prove, as plain as figures can prove, that as the production of sugar and the distress of the planters have increased, human life has diminished. I cannot refrain from reading to the House one other statement with regard to Demerara, which points out particularly, and which tells more plainly the loss of human life, and the decrease of physical strength to which these unfortunate labourers on these descriptions of property have fallen victims. We could imagine, if we were told that there was a great decrease of slaves of a certain age—say from twenty to thirty for instance,—that that decrease might, in some degree, be ascertained to be the effect, not yet unfelt, of the cessation of the slave trade, and the inequality of the sexes. But we do not find, that that is the case; for it appears that there is a decrease in the number of children under ten years of age—a decrease which cannot be accounted for by the absence of importation, but I fear it is to be attributed only to one dreadful cause—the increased labour and diminished productiveness of the parents. In slaves under the age of forty, there is a decrease, as compared with 1817, of 23,644, and in the number of slaves between thirty and forty years of age, the period at which labour is most severe, the class whose labour is most effective and on whom this burthen would fall—there is a decrease, as compared with 1817, to the frightful amount of 11,653; while, upon every ten years, from forty to fifty, from fifty to sixty, from sixty to seventy, and from seventy upwards, that is to say, among those persons who have passed the age of labour, and are unequal to physical exertions, there is an increase. Need I add anything to this statement? If I need go further into a detail which, even if it weary, cannot but be instructive to the House, I may add certain returns from Demerara, in which I find the decrease of the slave population is classed under respective heads, that are exceedingly striking. The decrease on cattle farms is two per cent.; among unattached slaves, it is one and one-fifth per cent.; on coffee plantations, three and one-tenth per cent.; on sugar plantations five and one-half per cent.; while, on cotton plantations, there is no decrease at all, but, on the contrary, an increase of one and three-fifths per cent. I must here be allowed to observe, that if no other advantage had been derived from the appointment of protectors of slaves, we have at least this benefit—that they have afforded us those other recorded facts which I shall now summarily lay before the House. This alone, I think, has fully justified the appointment of those officers in the Crown colonies, and would fully warrant Parliament in insisting upon their introduction into the chartered colonies also. I am afraid I may disgust the House by details of the punishments inflicted; but they are a part of the system, and I must refer to them. I find that in 1829, when the slave population was 61,627, the number of punishments returned to the protectors was no less than 17,359; in the next year, when the population was 59,547, the punishments were increased to 18,324; the number of lashes in that time amounting to 194,744. In the year 1831, the population being then only 58,000, the number of punishments were 21,656, the lashes being 199,500. This was the official record of the punishments, supplied to the protectors of slaves by the owners themselves; it did not include any punishments inflicted under judicial authority; not one of those inflicted by direction of a Magistrate; but those domestic punishments alone, which, in the present state of the law, are sanctioned; and this return also, let it be recollected, is confined to the Crown colonies, and represents the domestic, irresponsible punishments which the owners of slaves have inflicted by their own authority. I will not impute any guilt to the owners of the slaves—I will not impute to them anything more than that perversion of moral feeling which it is one of the greatest curses of slavery, that it entails and impresses upon the mind of the enslaver—I will not impute any want of the ordinary feelings of humanity, further than that they are perverted by prejudice, and rendered callous by custom and habit—but I call upon the House to consider where punishments are unrecorded, where no check is interposed by the legal authority, where no remedy, or no efficient remedy is given to the slave by authority of the law—to consider if, in this comparatively free state of Demerara, this be the amount of punishment inflicted in one year; what must be the nature of the system which is carried on in other colonies, where there are no checks?—what must be the degradation of the system under which the other colonies of the British Empire at this moment labour? What is the amount of unredressed injustice,—what is the amount of fatal oppression, and cruel tyranny, which calls upon this House to regulate, by interposing its solemn authority between this dreadful system of oppression, and that which Mr. Canning called "the abstract love of the cart-whip!" I am aware that we have been often taunted with our ignorance of the negro character; my belief is, that any man may inform himself sufficiently on that point, and that we commit a grievous error when we suppose that the moral circumstances attendant upon slavery have so changed the physical character of the negro as to unfit him for freedom. It is a most dangerous error to attribute that to the physical qualities of the negro which results solely from the moral conditions which slavery has superinduced. It yet remains to be seen whether the negro is less industrious or less anxious to better his condition than other men. We are, however, told to look at the manumitted negroes, and we are taunted with the fact, that not twenty negroes of those manumitted have ever returned to field labour. I very much doubt if altogether so many as twenty field negroes have ever been manumitted. From 1817 to the present time it does not appear that above 14,163 were manumitted altogether: three-fourths of these were females; and I can have very little difficulty in imagining the motives which led to the manumission of those, and to the manumission likewise of their male children. The remaining fourth were made up chiefly of domestic slaves and of mechanics: none of these were brought up to field labour: and it is no matter of surprise that when manumitted they should not have turned to that, the most degrading of the employments in which negroes are engaged. The whole of this argument amounts to saying, that the negroes are not fit for emancipation, and that we must wait until they are; and that argument, if it be good for anything, goes too far; for it proceeds to the indefinite conclusion, that we must postpone emancipation, not for ten or twenty or thirty years, but to some period no one can say how remote. I know that people will tell me we do not wish to perpetuate slavery—we merely wish to postpone it till the negroes are fit for freedom—till they manifest a disposition for laborious industry sufficient to qualify them for the privileges of free men. That argument, if it proves anything, proves too much. Do men ever show a disposition to labour until population presses upon food; and will that ever take place, so long as the depopulating influence of slavery prevails? We are told that the negroes own no domestic ties; nor will they, so long as you keep them in that state of slavery which debases their principles, and which deprives them of foresight, and which takes away from them the motives to industry. The slaves have no education, and you deny them any; for, as slaves, they can have none. They have hitherto been treated as chattels attached to the soil—do you think they can be made fit for freedom, till freedom has exercised its influence upon their minds and upon their moral character? The treatment of the West-India negroes is a stain upon a Christian age, and upon a country professing itself Christian. If the slaves be made acquainted with religion, they must learn that slavery is inconsistent with the Christian religion; and will you shut out religion, in order that you may maintain slavery? Other countries have read us a severe lesson upon this subject. In colonies belonging to Catholic countries, no man was allowed to possess a slave, who did not provide the means of instructing him in the Catholic faith. Be that, however, as it may, this I will say, that this House will ill discharge its duty, if it does not forthwith put forth a declaration of religious freedom, as respects the colonies, and does not compel the local authorities to leave to every negro within their limits, the free, independent, and inviolable right of adopting whatever form of Christianity he may think proper. The next point to which I mean to advert is the evidence of Mr. Dumas, himself a man of colour, and who had the best opportunities of forming an opinion upon such subjects; because a case fell under his observation at Antigua of an experiment made upon 371 captured negroes and thirty-six freehold escheated slaves, which bore directly on this part of the question. If there were any case in which such an experiment could be made under favourable circumstances, it must certainly be when Africans newly captured and unaccustomed to slavery were to be maintained and regulated according to the manners of the inhabitants of civilized countries. Yet the result of this experiment at Antigua was such as I think the House will say afforded a convincing proof of the fitness of the negro for speedy emancipation. With the exception of a single case of petty larceny, the manumitted slaves had, up to July last, when he left the island, been guilty of no breach of the laws whatever. Their industry, as he stated, was remarkable, as well as the avidity with which they endeavoured to obtain the possession of property, and the eagerness with which they copied the dress, the manners, and the speech of the Creoles. In some instances they had even the advantage of the Creoles; and most of the laborious works at St. John's were performed by them. They had gone on so prosperously and so diligently in their career of industry, that many of them had purchased their own houses; and out of the 371 captured slaves, only one man and five women had been returned upon the bounty of the Crown; these, too, being induced to do so by medical advice, as no longer able from age or infirmity to gain their own living. There was a still more remarkable instance of the same kind in the Bahamas. There the slave population was not regarded by themselves, but by the freemen of the islands, as no longer belonging to the class of slaves, but as already half free. A gallant Admiral has spoken of what he saw in the Bahamas, and in the island of Cuba, where the soil was not only highly cultivated for raising the necessaries of life, but a large quantity of sugar was raised by free labour. With respect to the case of the inhabitants of St. Domingo, in my mind it proves nothing at all. If we consider the horrors of their long struggle for liberty; if we call to mind the uncertainty which hung over every species of property; if we remember the driving out of all the capital formerly employed in the cultivation of the island; if we add to these the ruin of every species of manufacture; if, under all these circumstances, the cultivation of sugar had been diminished, it would not be at all surprising. But the House will recollect, that though sugar is not extensively exported from St. Domingo, yet sugar is very assiduously cultivated, as well as other necessaries and conveniences of life; and all this is done by the mass of free labourers, working on their own account. I have a still stronger instance to adduce—the only instance, indeed, of the gradual emancipation of a slave population on a large scale with complete and entire success; and if I appear to dilate too much upon this topic, the House will, perhaps, excuse me, considering the importance of the subject, when I state that ever since the plan for the emancipation of the West India slaves has been proposed, I have had an opportunity of conversing with a person who could give me the most important information on the subject—I mean the President of Venezuela, who in 1821, the year in which the measure of emancipation was first put into operation, was the protector of slaves at Caraccas, and consequently had the best possible opportunity of seeing what was done. In 1821, it was determined by General Bolivar to carry into effect a general measure of emancipation. It had previously been a rule, that such slaves as took part in the struggle against Spain should be liberated; but in 1821, it was resolved to proceed upon a general plan. For this purpose, a fund was created for the purpose of redeeming the slaves, principally, from a tax upon the proceeds of intestate estates. At the same time a tariff of the value of slaves was determined. They then proceeded to redeem the slaves. The older slaves were first redeemed, and those whose redemption cost the smallest sums of money; they next proceeded to purchase such as had the best claims in point of character; and they went on steadily in this course; so that, whereas in 1821, the number of slaves in Venezuela was 100,000, at the time of which I speak they were reduced to 25,000. This is an instance which must be extremely valuable to the House in its discussions upon this subject. Even in Venezuela there was no immediate measure of emancipation. A course was laid down—the certainty was given to the slave of ultimately attaining his freedom —and those who laid down the plan, which has proved so successful, did not fail to persevere in the course which has led to that success. Eager to take advantage of the opportunity thrown into my way by my interview with this gentleman, I put some questions to him upon such topics as seemed likely to afford useful information to me and to the House, for the purpose of directing us in the business of legislation on this important question. The first objection which struck me against this plan was the jealousy of the unemancipated slaves against their more fortunate brethren. I therefore asked him "What was the effect upon the minds of those whom you left in slavery at the time when you redeemed the others?" "There was not the slightest jealousy (was his reply)—their condition was not wretched—they had indulgent masters—masters rendered more indulgent by this prospective freedom of their slaves. Still liberty was the object of their wishes; but seeing that they were sure in their turn to reap the same advantages, they were content to wait with patience." But as any assumption of superiority on the part of the emancipated slave might have in time destroyed this feeling, I asked a second question: "What effect had the acquisition of freedom upon the emancipated slaves themselves? Did they feel any sense of degradation in mixing with those who had formerly been their companions? Had they any reluctance in joining them in the labours of agriculture?" "None in the least," he said, "if there be any difference between the free labourer and the slave working on the same estate, it is only that the free labourer works with greater energy." The last question which I put to him was: "What effect had this substitution of free for slave labour upon the agriculture of the country?" "In 1821," he replied, "when the measure first came into operation, agriculture was reduced to the lowest ebb; it is now flourishing." In corroboration of this statement, he showed me a letter from the Treasurer of Venezuela, a near relation of a Gentleman, a Member of this House, in which it is stated, that in the article of sugar, so far from any deterioration having taken place, the cultivation of it had only begun since 1821. Till there was a free labouring population in Venezuela, not a single pound was raised in Venezuela. Now that country has begun to furnish Curacoa with sugar, and Trinidad—the English Island of Trinidad—with rum, which is sold as, or declared to be equal to, the best Jamaica rum. Having thus stated in detail what I conceive to be the real circumstances of the case, having particularised the position in which this country is placed, which renders it impossible upon this point that the Legislature should stand still, even if it would; having shown, from the events which have taken place in other colonies, that perseverance in our system is replete with danger; having dwelt upon the facts which are detailed in official documents, and stated the repugnance of the Colonial Legislature to take any effectual step, either for the immediate, or the gradual abolition of slavery; having proved, in my opinion, the absolute and imperative necessity by which this House is bound to advance calmly, but resolutely and determinedly, to the one great object, the ultimate and complete abolition, to the utter destruction of the last vestige of colonial slavery; having stated all this, I now proceed to lay before the House the means by which this great object may, in my judgment, be effected, not without danger (for that can hardly be), but with the least danger that may be. I will not enter now into all the details of the measure. I will merely show the outline of the measure which I intend to propose—a measure, no doubt, susceptible of amendments and modifications; for it is impossible that any Government can propose a plan, particularly in so complicated a matter, which shall be in every respect unexceptionable, which shall not be liable to many great and grave objections; but the proposed measure is open to the consideration and the judgment of this House and of the country; and our wish is to try, if, by any means, we can reconcile contending interests and conflicting claims; if we can effect that great, that hallowed object—the extinction of slavery throughout every country that owes allegiance to the British Crown. The hon. member for Weymouth (Mr. Buxton), who has often advocated the cause of the slaves, brought forward a proposition in 1823, for the progressive abolition of slavery, by providing, that all children of slaves, born after a certain date, should be free. That was the whole of his demands then; that was the great consummation at which he then aimed; and that, in fact, would have secured the extinction of slavery. The hon. Member then used these memorable expressions—" We do not say, retrace your steps, but stop. We do not say, make reparation for the wrong you have done, but do no more wrong. Go no further." And the hon. member proposed, " that all children born after a certain day should be free."* To the whole and full extent of what the hon. member for Weymouth (Mr. Buxton) then asked the Government to go, to that whole extent is Government now disposed to go; and disposed to make a still more extensive change—to avoid that objection to the hon. Member's plan which Mr. Canning made in 1823. " I doubt," said Mr. Canning, " whether the measure recommended by the hon. Gentleman would produce the degree of satisfaction which he anticipates, and whether it might not produce feelings of an opposite nature. I doubt whether, in its operation, it would not prove at once, the least efficient, and most hazardous mode of attaining his own object."* And Mr. Canning further said, " How can the hon. Gentleman propose to divide slaves into two classes, one of which is to be made free directly, while he leaves the other to the gradual extinction of its state of suffering."† The power of this argument was irresistible, and the House felt it. I trust the House will now feel, that it is necessary to act in a different way, and that they will not think it sufficient to promise freedom for future generations, but to provide freedom for the present. I am prepared to offer freedom to the existing generation; I would not condemn them to that state of despair in which Mr. Canning supposed the hon. Gentleman wished to leave them; but I agree with the prudent language which was used in the discussions of 1823 and 1824, that the slaves should not be made free by one hasty step—that the shackles should not be burst at once—that they should not be flung forth suddenly from slavery to freedom, for which they may be unfit. But am I prepared to say, that we ought to wait for any given period, for one or two years, and that then the slaves should be immediately emancipated? I say there would be still greater danger if such a course were pursued, because the slaves would be unsettled, by having the prospect of liberty so long set before them. The intermediate period would undoubtedly be a period of great excitement, a period of tyranny on the one hand, and of defiance on the other, and the slaves would be abandoned to irrepressible disobedience and want of control. I propose a safer and a middle course, which will give to the slave all the essentials of freedom, will gradually sweep away slavery, and remove the slaves from the restrictions imposed upon them by Colonial Legislatures, but leave them still subject to such regulations as will operate as an incentive to the acquisition of industrious habits. I propose, that every slave, on the passing of this Act, shall immediately, not in one year, nor two years, have the power of claiming to be put in a situation in which they may enjoy all the privileges of freemen—in which they may wear no servile badge, and be subject to no corporal punishment—in which they may be entitled to the full enjoyment of all the comforts of their domestic ties—in which those who are nearest and dearest to them may not be liable to cruel punishments—in which their evidence in courts may not be disputable—in which their rights of property may be as full and as complete as those of their masters—a state, in short, in which they would be entitled to every right and every privilege of freemen, subject to this condition, and to this condition alone—that, for a certain period, they shall contract to labour under their present owners but their then employers. If I am asked how I propose to meet all those acts of the Colonial Legislatures which control the actions of slaves? Why, I say, if you pass a measure of this kind, you sweep all these acts away at once. These regulations are enacted for slaves; but the negroes will be no longer slaves. They will be entitled to every right of person, of property, of religion, to which a freeman is entitled—subject to this one only condition, and that but for a limited period. I cannot believe, even if the matter stood thus, and thus only, that this condition would be considered such an infraction of the freedom of the labourer as would give the smallest reason for the opponents of slavery to withhold their assent from the measure. Those who are anxious that this House should proceed to the immediate abolition of slavery, and who wish that every trace of slavery should vanish in a few years, would do well to reflect in what condition the agricultural labourer in England is placed, when he works upon contract—bound, as he is, to provide for himself lodging, clothes, and food, for which his wages are so inadequate. In what state is it proposed to place the negroes? The master will be bound to supply him with food and clothing, or to give him money to provide them, if it should be thought more advisable that it should be done by the negro himself. For this, three-fourths of the negro's time are to be given to his former owner—the day being considered as consisting of ten hours; and seven hours and a-half cannot be considered any very exorbitant demand for these advantages. For the remaining fourth part of his time, whether it be taken as portions of the day, or of the week, the negro shall be at liberty to transfer his services where he pleases; but with this advantage, that the master is bound to employ him at a rate of wages proportionate to the value which he originally sets upon him. Much of the dispute upon this question depends upon mere verbal criticism. "At what rate shall we fix the rate of wages?" it is asked. "Can you fix any rate applicable to any two islands?"—"Can you fix any rate applicable to all the islands?"—"Can you fix a rate applicable to every species of labour in any one particular island?"—On the other hand we may ask, "Shall we fling this whole matter loose, and satisfy ourselves by saying, that the wages shall be such as are sufficient to supply the labourer with the necessaries of life?" There may be some islands where the unoccupied land is of great extent, where the fertility is such as to render food easy of acquisition, where the wants of the people are few, and easily supplied. If wages were there restricted to what is necessary for procuring the mere necessaries of life, it would be impossible that agricultural labour for the planters should not there come to an immediate and entire cessation. Would such wages as these be a sufficient inducement for the negro to devote himself to continual labour? I do not credit what some people say about the negro character; but I do credit what is said about the slave character. I know the effect of a tropical climate. The effect of the state of slavery in these countries is to inculcate upon the slave, that labour is the greatest of all curses, and that the removal of labour is the greatest of all blessings. To throw the slave suddenly into freedom would be to destroy all his inclinations to industry; it would be exposing him to the temptation of recurring to his primitive habits of savage life, from which he has but lately been reclaimed. Therefore some restriction is necessary for a time, both for the masters, and for the good of the slaves themselves. I know no better security which can be devised, than that which I propose, by obliging the masters to fix a value upon their slaves, and afterwards regulating the rate of wages by that value. In what other way is it possible that the rate of wages can be fixed? Should it be referred to a committee of planters to determine the rate of wages according to the cost of maintenance, and the price of the necessaries of life? There can be no other criterion. My noble friend cheers, as if there could exist any competition, and that the rate of wages could be determined by that. I should be glad to hear him support, much more prove, such an opinion. There is, I repeat, no mode of doing equal justice, except by imposing upon the planter the necessity of fixing the price of the wages in this way; because the relation between the wages and the price fixed would operate as a check upon the planter's valuation. If he fixes a high price, he pays a high rate of wages; if he fixes a low price, the easier it is for the negro to obtain his freedom. I propose, therefore, that the labourer shall have a right to claim employment of his master for one-fourth of his time, according to a fixed scale of wages; that during such one-fourth of his time the labourer shall be at liberty to employ himself elsewhere; that the master shall fix a price upon the labourer at the time of his apprenticeship; that the wages to be paid by the master shall bear such a proportion to the price fixed by him; that for the whole of his spare time, if given to the master, the negro shall receive one-twelfth of his price annually, and in proportion for each lesser term. I will detain the House no longer than is absolutely necessary. In what condition will the planter then stand? He will obtain three-fourths of the negro's time for his food, clothing, and lodging. It may be asked, is it not necessary, in arranging a plan of such magnitude and importance, to look at the loss which the West-India proprietor is about to sustain? Is it right or just, that on him alone should be thrown the whole burthen of repairing the injustice which has been done to the negro, with the concurrence of the national Legislature for ages? The question must not be looked upon as confined entirely to property, however fully the species of property in question may be sanctioned by law; however frequently it may be made the subject of legal decision. I will not enter into the abstract question, whether one man ever can, consistently with the principles of natural justice, acquire a property in another man; but I proceed upon the principle, that if one man employs the labour of another, he is bound to give him support, and to take upon himself a portion of the risk attending the employment of the other. Upon what, then, do the Colonists rest their objections? Upon the deterioration of West-Indian property. It is exceedingly difficult, in the present state of such property, to fix any criterion for determining its value. I know an instance of a West-Indian estate producing 1,400*l.* a year, which was mortgaged for 5,000*l.* or 6,000*l.*, and afterwards sold for 10,000*l.* All incumbrances having been cleared off, and a surplus left besides, it was sold, last year, for an amount which will be exactly covered by the produce of the first year. I admit all that can be said, therefore, about the insecurity of West-Indian property, and the uncertainty of its market value, but I deny that any effect has been produced by any measure of Ministers upon the rate of profit derived from that property. When brought into the market, West-India property undoubtedly has sustained a fearful depreciation; but, in order to ascertain the real state of the case, let us look at the rate of profits; and in doing so we have a sure guide in the statements put forth by the West-India proprietors themselves; I allude to the returns presented by them to the Board of Trade, and these returns have the evidence of the West-India proprietors as to the cost of raising every hogshead of sugar, and also as to the number of hogsheads imported annually, and the net profit upon each. It appears that the net profit arising from the cultivation of sugar is 1,200,000*l.* a-year. We have not equally accurate data for calculating the net profits upon rum and coffee; but, assuming it, and I am not far wrong in doing so, to be between 250,000*l.* and 300,000*l.* a-year, the total net profit of West-India property will amount to 1,500,000*l.* annually. We propose to advance a loan to the planters, amounting to ten years purchase of those profits. We propose a loan to the West-India Planters of 15,000,000*l.* It will be a question for Parliament to decide in what manner and on what conditions that loan shall be granted, and how it shall be repaid—and further, if they shall be prepared to go so far as to say that they will not require repayment, it will be for Parliament, if it shall think fit to do so, to convert the loan into a gift. In the first instance, however, our proposition is to advance to the planter a loan of 15,000,000*l.* in consideration of the sacrifice on his part of the fourth of the labour of his slaves. With that fourth of his labour the negro will be able in twelve years (if we have not fixed the rate of wages too high, which I do not think is the case) to purchase the other three-fourths of his time. From the labour of the negro, in the first instance, the planter will have the means of paying Government the sum advanced; and at the end of twelve years the purchase money of the whole labour of the negro will be at his disposal. I do not state this proposition as wishing to bind the House with respect to it—on the contrary, I wish that both the amount of relief which the planter is to obtain, and the means of repayment, may be fully open to consideration. I also wish to leave to the consideration of the House whether we shall or shall not call upon the negro labourer to contribute his share to the repayment of the sum advanced to the planter. It is quite clear, that the repayment must be borne either by the produce of negro labour, or by the revenue of this country; it cannot in justice be borne by the planter. One or other of those alternatives must be adopted. There is certainly a middle course, but into that consideration I will not at present enter. For my own part, I think a great object would be gained by calling on the negro to contribute his share to the repayment of the advance. I think it likely that the negro will be encouraged to continue his industry and exertions, if out of his wages for the fourth of his labour, some deduction should be made for the purpose I have adverted to. To tell him that out of the produce of the fourth of his labour something should be laid up for that purpose, would certainly be more conducive to create in him habits of industry and of self denial, than if, having all his wants provided for by the planter in consideration of three-fourths of his labour, he should feel that the only object of employing the remaining fourth would be, at his own option, to provide himself with superfluities. In the latter case there would not be such a stimulus to active exertion as in the former. I, therefore, do not think that to exempt the negro from contributing his share of the repayment is by any means desirable. I believe, Sir, that I have now stated as much in detail as is necessary, and with one exception, the plan which his Majesty's Government propose to carry into effect on this question. The exception is this—it will be necessary, in order to secure the success of this plan, to provide that, the absence of which has rendered so many former proceedings with respect to the colonies void and ineffective—I mean something of an executory power. The House will, therefore, be called upon to consider the expediency of having in the Legislative, as in the conquered colonies, stipendiary Magistrates, to be appointed by the Crown, unconnected with the colonies, having no local or personal prejudices, paid by this country, for the purpose of doing justice between the negro and the planter, of watching over the negro in his state of new-born freedom, and of guiding and assisting his inexperience in the contracts into which he may enter with his employer. There is also another object on which I am sure his Majesty's Government will not appeal in vain to the House or to the country. I feel perfect confidence in calling upon this House to pledge itself, whether in aid of the Local Legislatures of the colonies, or without any aid from those Legislatures, to establish a religious and moral system of education for the negroes. We are about to emancipate the slaves; the old, after a trial of their industrious and other good qualities—the young immediately. With the young, therefore, our responsibility will immediately commence. If we place them in a state of freedom, we are bound to see that they are fitted for the enjoyment of that state; we are bound to give them the means of proving to themselves that the world is not for merely animal existence—that it is not the lot of man merely to labour incessantly from the cradle to the grave—and that to die is not merely to get to the end of a wearisome pilgrimage. We must endeavour to give them habits, and to imbue them with feelings calculated to qualify them for the adequate discharge of their duties here; and we must endeavour to instil into them the conviction, that when those duties shall be discharged, they are not "as the brutes that perish." Sir, I have now gone through the various points to which I think it necessary to call the attention of the House. I know the difficulties, the almost insurmountable obstacles, which attend almost any plan with reference to this subject; and I know the peculiar disadvantages under which I bring forward the present plan. But I entertain a confident hope that the Resolutions which I shall have the honour to submit to the House contain a germ, which, in the process of time, will be matured, by better judgment and knowledge, into a perfect fruit; and that, from the day on which the Act passes there will be secured to the country, to the colonies, and to all classes of his Majesty's subjects, the benefit of a virtual extinction of all the horrors attendant on a state of slavery; and that, at no very distant period, by no uncertain operation, but by the effect of that machinery which the proposed plan will put in motion, the dark stain which disfigures the fair freedom of this country will be wholly wiped out. Sir, in looking to this most desirable object, it is impossible not to advert to those who first broached the mighty question of the extinction of slavery, the earliest labourers in that cause, the final triumph of which they were not destined to see. They struggled for the establishment of first principles —they were satisfied with laying the foundation of that edifice which they left it to their successors to rear; they saw the future, as the prophets of old saw "the days that were to come;" but they saw it afar off, and with the eye of faith. It is not without the deepest emotion I recollect that there is yet living one of the earliest, one of the most religious, one of the most conscientious, one of the most eloquent, one of the most zealous friends of this great cause, who watched it in its dawn. Wilberforce still remains to see, I trust, the final consummation of the great and glorious work which he was one of the first to commence; and to exclaim, like the last of the prophets to whom I have already alluded: "Lord, now let thy servant depart in peace." Sir it is with great regret that I have felt it necessary to detain the House so long; but on a subject of so much difficulty, it was imperative upon me to do so. I will now, however, after thanking the House for the patience and attention with which they have been so good as to listen to me, conclude with offering up an ardent prayer, that by the course which they may adopt, they will for a second time set the world a glorious example of a commercial nation, weighing commercial advantages light in the balance against justice and religion; that they will achieve the great object of extinguishing slavery, gradually, safely, but at the same time completely; a result the more to be desired, if accomplished by a yielding on one side and the other, which may make both sides forget extreme opinion; and which will exhibit a great and proud example of a deliberative assembly, reconciling conflicting interests, liberating the slave without inflicting hardship on his master, gratifying the liberal and humane spirit of the age without harming even those who stand in its way, and vindicating their high functions by moderately, but with determination, and in a manner honourable to the people of whom they are the representatives, and acting in a manner on this important question, which will afford a sure pledge of a successful termination of the glorious career on which they are about to enter. Sir, I now beg leave to move the following Resolutions:—

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* Hansard (new series) ix. pp. 268—270.

* Hansard, (new series) ix. p. 284.

† Ibid. p. 281.

1.—"That it is the opinion of this Committee, that immediate and effectual measures be taken for the entire abolition of slavery throughout the colonies, under such provisions for regulating the condition of the negroes, as may combine their welfare with the interests of the proprietors.

2.—"That it is expedient that all children born after the passing of any Act, or who shall be under the age of six years at the time of passing any Act of Parliament for this purpose, be declared free; subject, nevertheless, to such temporary restrictions as may be deemed necessary for their support and maintenance.

3.—"That all persons now slaves, be entitled to be registered as apprenticed labourers, and to acquire thereby all rights and privileges of freedom; subject to the restriction of labouring, under conditions, and for a time to be fixed by Parliament, for their present owners.

4.—"That to provide against the risk of loss which proprietors in his Majesty's colonial possessions might sustain by the abolition of slavery, his Majesty be enabled to advance, by way of loan, to be raised from time to time, a sum not exceeding in the whole 15,000,000*l.*, to be repaid in such manner, and at such rate of interest as shall be prescribed by Parliament.

5.—"That his Majesty be enabled to defray any such expense as he may incur in establishing an efficient stipendiary Magistracy in the colonies, and in aiding the Local Legislatures in providing for the religious and moral education of the negro population to be emancipated."

I am too well aware of the extent and of the importance of these Resolutions to desire to call upon the House to pronounce on them hastily. It was with the greatest regret that his Majesty's Government felt themselves unable to accede to a proposition which was made to them to defer bringing forward their plan on this subject. But, after the publicity which had been given to all the details of the proposed measure, the Government felt that it was important, in justice to themselves and to their plan, to refuse the delay, and to state, through their official organ in that House, the grounds and principles of the proposed measure. Having done so, however, I have no wish whatever to call for a sudden decision of the House upon the subject. If it should be the desire of any hon. Member to have further time to consider the Resolutions, I am not only prepared to accede to such an intimation, but I must confess that I think it would be very just and reasonable. It will, therefore, be in the discretion of the House, whether they will enter into the discussion of the question at the present moment or not.

Sir *Robert Peel* asked whether it was intended that the negroes should be subject to corporal punishment if they violated the contracts into which they entered with their masters?

Mr. *Stanley* replied, that they certainly would be so. The power of punishment, however, would be taken from individual planters, and placed in the hands of the Magistrates. In fact, there would be no difference between the labourer who entered into a contract in the West-India colonies, and a labourer who entered into a similar contract in this country.

The Resolutions having been read by the Speaker,

Viscount *Howick* spoke as follows*:—Sir, I can assure the House, that I rise upon this occasion with feelings so painful as hardly to leave me the power of utterance. Situated as I am, the House must be aware how distressing it must be to me to find myself compelled, by an imperative sense of duty, to express an opinion adverse to the plan which has just been unfolded by my right hon. friend. If I disapproved only of the details of that plan—if I could have any hope that those modifications to which my right hon. friend has stated that he will not be unwilling to assent, could remove the strong objections which I entertain to it, I certainly would have reserved for a future opportunity the observations which I now feel called upon to make. But, Sir, I fear that the difference between us is one of principle, which no minor alterations can get over; and, therefore, feeling as I do upon this subject, I must endeavour to state to the House the grounds of my dissent from the measure proposed by my right hon. friend. Sir, there is perhaps hardly any other question in the whole range of our policy upon which I could have been induced to take the course which I am now about to adopt. Upon almost any other subject I should have yielded my own opinion to that of the Members of the present Government. I should have done so, not only from the desire to avoid the pain of differing from them, but also because, with the perfect assurance I have of the uprightness and honesty of their intentions, and with the confidence I feel in their ability to decide what course, under all circumstances, it is best to pursue, I should have felt that in deferring to their judgment, I was not only consulting my private feelings, but doing that which my public duty required. But, Sir, this is a question of which my right hon. friend has eloquently described the importance—one on which I feel to be at stake, not only the honour of this country, but the happiness or misery of nearly 800,000 of our fellow-creatures, with the lives of many of these unoffending persons. It is also a question to which during the last two years my attention has been almost constantly directed; which, during that period, I may fairly say, has occupied the larger portion of my time, and upon which I have, therefore, formed opinions not easily to be shaken; hence also the strong conviction on my mind is, that the adoption of any measure founded on the principles which my right hon. friend has laid down, must lead to the most fatal results. However unwillingly, I must state to the House what are the considerations which have led me to that conclusion. My right hon. friend has said, that he proposes at once to place the negroes almost in a state of freedom—to give them (I think was his expression) all the essentials of freedom. Could I be persuaded that such would be the effect of the measure he has recommended, I should be spared the pain of opposing it; but the House must not allow themselves to be imposed upon by words. Slavery does not consist in a name. The real distinction between slavery and freedom is, that in a state of freedom men work because they are convinced that it is their interest to do so—because their reason is satisfied that, comparing the privations which idleness will entail upon them, with the advantages which industry will command, it is better for them to labour, than to indulge in their natural inclination for repose. In a state of slavery, on the other hand, men work from fear, for the benefit of others. If, as I believe, this is the only distinction between a state of slavery and a state of freedom, I ask, how can it be said; that my right hon. friend by his proposal would get rid of slavery? By that plan the negro is to be apprenticed to a master not of his own choice, and is to be compelled to enter into a contract, the terms of which he is not at liberty to alter or to reject. For that master he is to be compelled to labour three-fourths of his day, and in return he is to receive the same supplies, the same necessaries, which the planter is at present in the habit of furnishing. Now, Sir, it appears by the evidence last year given before the Committees of both Houses of Parliament, that the annual value of all supplies, of every description, usually furnished by a Jamaica planter, to each negro, is highly estimated at 45*s.* Mr. Shand, a planter of long experience, states this to be the amount; other witnesses put it much lower; but allow that it is even higher than Mr. Shand has stated, and assume that 52*s.* is not more than the value of the supplies now furnished to the negroes, it will follow that according to the proposal of my right hon. friend, a shilling a week, or 2*d.* a-day, is to be the remuneration for which the negro is, during three-fourths of his time, to be compelled to labour. But, what is the real value of this labour? This, fortunately, we have the means of ascertaining. Several witnesses have stated, that in hiring a jobbing gang, in the island of Jamaica, 3*s.* 4*d.* a-day, is usually paid for each negro. At the same rate, the value of three-quarters of a day's work, would be half-a-crown. It follows, therefore, that the labour which the apprenticed negro is to be compelled to give to his master, for 2*d.* is fairly and honestly worth exactly fifteen times that sum. My right hon. friend has asked, in what respect the condition of the apprenticed negro will differ from that of a labourer in this country, who has entered into a contract to work for a particular master for a considerable period; since he says the English labourer thinks himself well off, if he can earn a subsistence for himself and his family. I say, that the difference between the two cases is simply, that in the one the contract is voluntary, in the other it is not; that in the one case, the labourer receives the whole, in the other, only a trifling proportion of the value of his labour; and that what my right hon. friend proposes is in effect, whatever it may be in name, a virtual retention of the principle of slavery, the exaction, by compulsion, of labour for the advantage, not of the labourer but of the master. After my right hon. friend's eloquent description of the injustice and horrors of slavery, I think, therefore, that it was for him to have shown what advantage he supposes would arise from this apprenticeship of the negro, which I maintain to be neither more nor less than a continuance of the whole principle of slavery. Is this system intended for the benefit of the negro or the master? My right hon friend has not very distinctly explained himself upon this point; but it is one on which it is absolutely necessary that there should be a clear understanding. Let us have no doubt or disguise on the subject; since I must enter my most decided and solemn protest against the continuance, for however short a time, of any part of the existing system, with a view to the pecuniary interest of the planters. Whatever claim the master may have on this country, which is a point for future consideration, he can have none whatever on the slaves. They can have incurred no debt by having been the victims of violence and wrong; they might, perhaps, on the contrary, claim some compensation from the master for their past sufferings and unrequited services. My right hon. friend may perhaps say, that his plan is intended for the benefit of both master and slave. If so, the way in which it is to operate for the benefit of the slave ought to have been made more manifest. At first sight, at least, it is difficult to understand how the slave can be benefited by giving away so large a portion of the value of his labour to one who has in justice no claim whatever upon him. I understood my right hon. friend to say, that he proposed that the negroes should be placed in this state of apprenticeship, because he did not consider that they could at present be detained in regular industry by other means, and because he believed that they would thus, before they became entirely free, acquire habits of steady exertion. He acknowledged that there is no difference between the character of the white and of the black, but he said, he believed that there is a very great difference between the character of slaves and those who have been brought up in freedom. He said, that the effect of slavery is necessarily to teach those who have been subject to it an undue love for repose, and a more than ordinary distaste for labour, and, on this account, he proposed that the slaves should not at once become entirely free. But what is the cure for the comparative idleness of the slave proposed by my right hon. friend? Idleness, which he himself acknowledges to be the consequence of a system which has taught the slave to connect with labour no idea of the advantages resulting from it. The cure which he recommends is still in a great measure to continue the system from which the evil has arisen.

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* Reprinted from the corrected Report published by Ridgway.

Sir, I believed it to be a truth so universally recognized, as to hold the rank of an axiom, that men can only be taught industry by having the fruits of their industry secured to them, by being made to know that if they will consent to labour, the reward of their toil shall not be taken from them by another. Is the plan of my right hon. friend in accordance with this principle? Far from it. For twelve years the negro is to be compelled to work during three-fourths of his time for the benefit of his master; his toil is to be sweetened by no pleasing anticipations of the advantages it is to be the means of procuring for him, but it is to be prompted only by the fear of punishment, and labour is still to appear to him in the light of a task unjustly imposed upon him by superior power. Why, Sir, I ask is this necessary? Even if it be admitted, that the negroes cannot yet be trusted to labour without compulsion, why should not the fruits of their forced industry be applied for their own benefit?—why, if they are to be considered as children in mind, though men in bodily strength, should not guardians be given them, authorized, if you will, to force them to work, but under the obligation of laying out in the manner most advantageous for them, what they may earn? There would be no difficulty in finding out modes of applying usefully any money thus obtained; my right hon. friend has himself stated, that there is a lamentable deficiency of the means of instruction, and more especially of religious instruction, Why not set apart any funds arising from the labour of the negroes, to supply this deficiency? The knowledge that what they earned was thus employed for their own benefit, would go far to reconcile them to the obligation to labour imposed upon them. But surely the obvious tendency of the system of compulsory labour merely for the advantage of others, which my right hon. friend has proposed, is to perpetuate and to strengthen that vicious association of ideas which slavery produces, and which has caused agricultural labour, in every other country regarded as the most honourable, in slave colonies to be considered as degrading.

For these reasons I believe that the plan proposed by my right hon. friend would not tend to the benefit of the negro, and I therefore upon that ground alone should be forced to refuse it my concurrence. But I am aware that other Gentlemen, who take a different view from myself of the justice of the case would not consider the interest of the negro a sufficient reason for rejecting a measure, which should be calculated to diminish the pecuniary loss, which the abolition of slavery is likely to inflict upon the slave-owner. It is, therefore, important to consider what would be the effect of this measure, upon the interest of the planters. My belief is, that it would be no less injurious to the planters than to the slaves. Nominally, the planters would retain the right to three-fourths of the time of their negroes; but how would they render that time productive? My right hon. friend has truly stated that men of whatever colours whether black or white would never exert themselves strenuously, except under the influence of some strong stimulus. In this, and in other countries, where freedom exists, the labourer works to secure himself from want, and he exerts himself diligently, because he knows that his reward will be in proportion to his diligence. Slaves, on the other hand, labour only because if they do not do so they are punished. Their stimulus is terror. Which of these motives will be brought to bear on the apprenticed negro? Will he have any motive, voluntarily, to exert himself? His wages will not increase with any increase of exertion on his part; he will in no way be a gainer, by working well, or a loser, by working ill. He will, on the contrary, be prompted to do as little as possible for his master, by a desire to avoid fatigue, and to reserve his strength for his own portion of the day; while it will be only a natural feeling, which will incline him to render, what he will necessarily regard as an unjust demand upon him, as little advantageous as possible to the person by whom that demand is made.

The plan, therefore, which has been proposed, will fail to act upon the will of the negro; there is no chance of his, voluntarily, exerting himself. Can it on the other hand, be expected, that the stimulus of fear will be brought into effective operation? Fear, Sir, we must remember, is at best, but a bad stimulus. All persons, whatever their opinion, on the subject of slavery, agree as to the fact, that, in a given time, a slave will do twice as much work for himself, as he can, by any amount of punishment be compelled to perform for his master.

Such, Sir, is acknowledged to be the case, even under the driving system, when the negro is compelled to labour under the continual dread of the lash; when the slightest relaxation of his toil is visited at the instant, with a stroke of the cart whip! Knowing this to be the case, the colonists, have universally resisted any diminution whatever of the power of applying this stimulus, on which alone they can depend for obtaining labour. It is well known that to abolish the use of the whip in the field, is one of the measures for the mitigation of slavery, which Mr. Canning considered to be most immediately necessary, and which the Government of this country, ever since the year 1823, has constantly most strongly recommended to the Colonial Legislatures. Yet, Sir, although in the year I have mentioned, Lord Seaford, then Mr. Ellis, declared in this House, that there could be no doubt as to the propriety of this regulation, and of the willing assent of the Colonial Legislatures to so obvious and necessary an amelioration, no one Assembly has yet been brought to adopt it.

Lord Seaford, I fear, had not a very just conception of the real nature of the system, and of the mode in which the slaves on his own estate were compelled to labour. The Assembly of Jamaica were more accurately informed respecting it, and accordingly, they have repeatedly refused to concur in this proposed improvement. The driving system is at this day in full vigour in this colony; as in all the others having Representative Assemblies.

But, in the Crown colonies, the use of the whip in the field has been prohibited; and I will take the liberty of reading to the House the opinion of persons connected with the colonies, as to the restrictions on the power of punishment which have been imposed by the Order in Council.

'The colonists really wish to remove 'every feature of slavery that appears re-'pulsive to the people of England; but it 'is clear, that as the slaves are entitled to 'food, clothing, lodging, and medical at-'tendance, from the master, it is only by 'the fear of punishment that the ill-disposed 'slave can be induced to work; and by the 'new Order in Council the power of the 'proprietor and manager is so fettered and 'restricted, that what is left is only suffici-'ent as a source of struggle and irritation 'between the ill-disposed slave and his 'manager, but inadequate to secure the 'performance of reasonable work.'

What is here said, of the ill-disposed slave may be said of all the slaves; for so far as having a strong disinclination to work for the benefit of another, all the slaves are ill-disposed. Sir, this opinion comes from persons entitled, upon this question, to much consideration. It is an extract from a remonstrance against the last Order in Council, drawn up by a Committee of merchants and planters, interested in the Crown colonies. Experience has fully confirmed the accuracy of the view which they have taken. My right hon. friend has quoted a remarkable return of the punishments inflicted during the last three years in the colony of Demerara. I had meant to have called the attention of the House to that return, but I will not again repeat the details which have been already given. I need only remind the House that it showed that while there has been a decrease in the population, there has been an extraordinary increase both in the number and in the severity of punishments; and I must add, what my right hon. friend omitted, that the official report of the very active and intelligent officer, now protector of slaves in Demerara, from which this return is taken, goes on to state, that three-fourths of these punishments have been inflicted in consequence of difficulties with respect to the performance of work; they are described in the records transmitted to his office, as being for "bad work;" and the same officer states that seven-eighths of all the punishments inflicted in the colony, arise, directly or indirectly, from this cause. The protector also states, that while the amount of punishments is thus increasing, the effect produced is daily diminishing, that there is a growing difficulty in compelling the negroes to work. It is found, that as the application of the stimulus of fear becomes less immediate, it is necessary to render it more intense; but every increase in the severity of the punishments inflicted, only renders a still further increase necessary, and the planters speedily arrive at the limit of what they are by law permitted to inflict. When this is the case, the negroes know that they have nothing further to fear, and they can with impunity enjoy the pleasure of revenge, by rendering their labour unproductive to their masters, and in the words I have quoted, the power of the manager is "found to be only sufficient as a source of struggle between the slave and his manager, but inadequate to secure the performance of reasonable work." Such, Sir, is the result to which, in the opinion of the protector of slaves, things are at this moment rapidly tending in Demerara; I cannot, therefore, agree with my right hon. friend in attributing the rejection, by the Colonial Legislatures, of the recommendation to prohibit the use of the whip in the field, to what he termed, in the words of Mr. Canning, their "abstract love of the cart-whip." On the contrary, I believe that in rejecting this advice, they have shown that they understood better than those by whom it was tendered, the real nature of the system they were asked to modify. Sir, I believe they judged correctly, and that, if the system is to be kept up at all, it is better it should be kept up in its full vigour, and that there should be no relaxation of its severity. My right hon. friend has asked if 190,000 lashes are inflicted in Demerara, what must be the number in Jamaica? Sir, I believe the number is out of all comparison smaller in proportion in Jamaica. A good master in Jamaica is rarely compelled actually to make use of the whip. The certainty that it is at hand, and that, if necessary, it will be used at the moment, is sufficient to induce the slaves to work steadily without its actual infliction. But, in Demerara, the insufficiency of the power placed in the hands of the planter, leads to its frequent and severe use, because it renders the obedience of the slave less ready. Sir, I firmly believe the well-meant measures which have been adopted for the improvement of the condition of the slaves, have not in reality tended to their good, and this belief is not a little increased by the fact, that, in no colony is the mortality amongst the slave population so great as in Demerara.

Sir, I am aware that it will be said, that the opinion I have now expressed is inconsistent with that which I have formerly maintained on this subject, nor do I deny that my opinion has gradually undergone a very great alteration. The more I have inquired into it, the further my views of the necessity of a change of system have extended. When I sat on the opposite benches, I had adopted (I am now ashamed to think how lightly) the common notion, that it is a delusion to talk of the evils of slavery, and that the outcry upon this question has been raised, partly by persons of great, but mistaken humanity, partly by others, having motives of a less praiseworthy kind. So strong was this feeling in my mind, that the last time this question was discussed, while I sat on the other side of the House, when only a few days before the dissolution of Parliament in 1830, a motion (which most hon. Members must remember) was made respecting it by the present Lord Chancellor, even his eloquence failed to convince me that the interference of Parliament was called for. I thought that there was more of declamation in the highly-wrought pictures of individual cases of cruelty which he drew, than of argument to prove that these acts of cruelty arose out of the system he condemned, and though I was at that time, as since, a follower of the same political party to which my noble friend belonged, I actually on that occasion left the House without voting.

When I was appointed to the office which I lately filled, it became my duty to consider the subject attentively, and I was soon satisfied that there were a sufficient number of those cases of cruelty which have been described, to call for some check against an abuse of the power which the master possessed. But I was not yet convinced that the evil was inherent in the system itself, and that the attempt to guard against such an abuse of power, would in fact, only aggravate the mischief. I adopted the opinion (certainly without sufficient examination) which had received the sanction of the high authority of Mr. Canning, and which, indeed, seemed to have been universally acquiesced in by all members of this House, which had been strongly urged by the colonists, and not rejected by the advocates of emancipation, that it is impossible suddenly to abolish slavery, and that the yoke imposed upon the negroes should not at once be removed, but that its weight should gradually be diminished, so that they might pass, as it were, insensibly from slavery to freedom. Sir, I can now hardly account to myself for the facility with which I received this doctrine, as one of which the truth was beyond dispute; and it is only by the progress of the discussions which have recently taken place, by the practical difficulties which have been met with in every endeavour to mitigate the horrors of slavery, and by the failure of the attempt which has been made during the last ten, and still more during the last two years, to carry Mr. Canning's views into effect, that I have been at length convinced, that, if the system is to be maintained at all, it had better be so altogether, and that, if labour is to be obtained by force, and not by acting upon the will of the labourer, it is better for all parties that the master should be a completely irresponsible despot. In this state of things, there would be individual cases of more revolting cruelty, than when the opposite system is pursued, but the total amount of suffering, I believe, would be less; in Jamaica, for instance, atrocities may take place which would be impossible in Demerara, where the Order in Council is in force, but the whole number of lashes inflicted, I have reason to believe, as I have already said, to be greater in proportion in the latter.

Now, Sir, if such is the effect of the attempt to enforce compulsory labour, under the regulations established by the Order in Council, what is to be expected from the same attempt under the restrictions which my right hon. friend proposes to establish. If the master in Demerara has now the greatest difficulty in obtaining effective labour from his slave, how will he be able to get it from the apprentice? I have already shown, in a manner which I think it will be difficult to answer, that the apprentice will have no motive whatever to work hard, that it will be his object, during the seven hours and a-half which he is to give to his master, to stand with the hoe in his hand, and to do as little as he possibly can, because he knows, that whether he works well or ill, he will receive only the 15th part of the value of his labour—[An *Hon. member* here said, that Lord Howick had forgot to calculate the subsistence of the slaves.] The hon. Member near me objects, that in calculating the remuneration which the negro is to receive, I omitted to take into account the value of his subsistence supplied to him by his master. Sir, I am surprised, that the hon. Member, who seems to take an interest in this question, should not be better acquainted with the system prevailing in Jamaica, with respect to the subsistence of the slaves.

Sir, the slaves do not depend for their support upon their masters. I have already stated, upon the authority of Mr. Shand, that the whole value of the supplies of every sort furnished to the negro, is only 45 shillings annually, and of these supplies, the only part which consists of any thing of the nature of food, is a third of a barrel of herrings, which is used less as food than as seasoning to the food with which the negro supplies himself.

But, Sir, as the hon. Member has mentioned this point, and it is one on which, I believe, a good deal of misapprehension exists, I will take the liberty of reading to the House a more particular description of the actual practice, which has been given by the very best authority. The passage I am "about to read, is from a work entitled Notices of Jamaica, in the years 1810 and 1811," by a Gentleman of the name of Mattison, a planter of many years' experience, who has given in this work, what are, I believe, admitted to be useful practical instructions as to the management of a plantation. In this work, after a discussion as to the different kinds of canes best adapted to particular situations, I find the following account of the manner in which the subsistence of the negro is provided for.

'As soon as a negro is established on a 'plantation, he is furnished with a lot of 'land, and after a certain interval is expected 'to subsist his family and himself by his 'own exertions. This rule is laid down 'for males and females. If it should 'happen that, through idleness, or sickness, 'or old age, or in consequence of too 'numerous a family of children, the provision ground should be neglected, or become 'unproductive or insufficient, the negro 'is not allowed to expect, nor, in point 'of fact, does he obtain assistance from the 'stores of the plantation. There are 'many exceptions to this practice; some 'arising from local considerations, and 'others occasioned by the superior good 'policy and humanity of individual 'planters; but I state it broadly, that such 'is the general practice from one end of the 'island to the other. In case of need, 'brothers assist their sisters, uncles assist 'their nieces, and children maintain their 'parents; while the aged and the infirm, who own no family, are left to depend upon the common charity and benevolence of their neighbours, or upon the fruits of their industry, saved and stored up during better days.'

'Partial famine will happen on many plantations, as the effect of negligence and mismanagement; and it unfortunately happens, that the established system for the subsistence of plantation negroes (which in most points of view is a valuable, though an imperfect system, requiring constant vigilance and occasional relaxation) operates as an encouragement to a most culpable degree of negligence in those who act as Overseers of Plantations. It is the duty of the negro to feed himself; and it is his fault, it is said, if he does not take the necessary precautions against want; the system, thus affording a plausible, though certainly an insufficient apology for the supineness, amounting to wickedness, of the Overseer, who, to say nothing of the common duties of humanity, ought to be prepared at all points, and under every possible emergency, to preserve the valuable property confided to his care.'

So much, Sir, as to the reasonableness of the fears which I have so often heard expressed, that if the slaves were, by emancipation, to be deprived of their claim on their masters, their subsistence would be rendered precarious, and that the old and young, at all events, would be left to starve. But I will return to the argument I was pursuing when diverted by the observation of the hon. Member. I have shown, Sir, that under the Order in Council, there is great difficulty in obtaining from the slaves a fair amount of labour. How, then, let me ask, would it be possible to do so under the regulations my right hon. friend has proposed? Under the Order in Council, the master is the sole judge, whether the negroes have or have not exerted themselves as they ought, and if dissatisfied, can order, at his own discretion, the infliction upon any one whom he considers to have been idle, corporal punishment, to the extent of twenty-five lashes. But, according to the plan my right hon. friend has proposed, though corporal punishment is still to be retained, the power of inflicting it is to be exclusively vested in the Magistrate. I will ask any hon. Member who has ever seen agricultural labour performed, how it will be possible for a Magistrate, when a gang of labourers are brought before him for idleness, fairly to decide the question? Suppose the apprenticed negroes to have passed the required number of hours with the hoe in their hands; that they declare they have done as much as they could, and are very sorry they could not do more—how is the Magistrate to decide whether this is true or false? And can it for a moment be imagined, that the fear of punishment to be thus inflicted, will obtain from the negro such an amount of labour as will render it of any real advantage to his master to employ him? Perhaps I may be told, that the difficulty will be obviated by giving task-work to the apprenticed negroes. The West Indians, at least, will not be of that opinion, for they have uniformly alleged, that by far the greater proportion of the labour required in the production of sugar, cannot be so assigned; but, suppose this to be otherwise; how is the task to be assigned?

My right hon. friend intends that one-fourth of the day should be allowed to the negro. I conclude, therefore, if he is to work by task, that the task must be assigned by the Magistrate; for if otherwise, if the master is to be the judge of the proper quantity of work to be performed, the concession to the negro of one-fourth of the day will be of little value to him. But the Magistrate can only fix what shall be the average task to be performed in each kind of labour; he cannot adapt this average to the varying circumstances of each individual case. For instance, the Magistrate may declare, that under ordinary circumstances, a negro of ordinary strength shall dig 120 cane-holes of certain dimensions, as a day's work. But this task may be too much for one apprenticed negro, and less than another could fairly perform in the time prescribed by law. According to the varying nature of the soil, it may be too much in one field, too little in another. Even in the same field, the accident of dry or of wet weather may make an equal difference in the amount of labour required in digging the same number of cane-holes. Now, before a negro can be punished for neglecting his task, all these circumstances will have to be inquired into. I ask, then, is it possible that labour can be obtained from the slaves by the fear of punishment, which can only be inflicted under such restrictions? And when I speak of labour, I mean really strenuous exertions, not mere feeble, inefficient, pretended labour. Could less than an army of Magistrates even attempt to carry such a system into effect? And with that assistance, could such an amount of labour be procured from the negroes as will make it worth their master's while to pay them even the inadequate wages he is to be called upon to give? Will he not find, that it is a dear bargain, under such circumstances, to give even two pence for the number of hours' labour which, if the negroes worked hard, would fairly be worth *2s. 6d.*?

But, Sir, we need not trust to mere reasoning upon this subject; the experiment of apprenticed labourers has been tried under circumstances infinitely more favourable, and has failed. My right hon. friend assigns as his reason for placing the negroes, for a time, in this condition, that the indolent habits they have acquired as slaves, render them not sufficiently accessible to the motives by which free labourers are stimulated, and that it is necessary for a time to subject them to some stronger impulse. But what, Sir, if white labourers themselves, when placed in a situation similar to that in which, according to the plan of my right hon. friend, the negroes will find themselves; what, I say, if under such circumstances, white labourers have uniformly proved idle and useless to their employers? Yet such is the fact. The high price of labour in the Australian Colonies has frequently induced persons to carry out to New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land indentured servants, bound to work for them for a certain time, at wages, which, though higher than those paid in this country, were yet below the ordinary rate in those colonies. This experiment I believe I am warranted in stating to have succeeded in no single instance; and the causes of the failure are obvious. The labourers so carried out, finding on their arrival that, if free from their engagement, they could obtain higher wages than they had covenanted to receive, have been careless as to whether they pleased or displeased their master; they have had no motive for endeavouring to satisfy him with the labour they performed, since the threat of dismissal was no threat to them, but on the contrary to be released from their bargain was a direct advantage. The employers of these men have therefore had to trust to compulsion to procure their industry; when the apprentice was idle, the master could only carry him before the Magistrate, and have him punished for his idleness; but each time that he was punished, he came back more wilfully stupid and more obstinately idle than before, until at length, after repeated punishments, after having caused not a little ill blood between the parties, the right to the services of the apprentice has been abandoned by the master; he has found that even low wages given to a reluctant labourer were more than he could afford, and that it was better at once to cancel the indenture.

Now, Sir, how much more unfavourable are the circumstances, under which my right hon. friend proposes that an endeavour should be made to obtain labour by the same process, which in the case I have described, has been found ineffectual. The white servant was discontented because his stipulated wages were perhaps one-fourth or one-third below the market rate of the colony; the negro is to have but one-fifteenth of the value of his labour. The white apprentice knew that he had voluntarily and freely entered into the engagement by which he was bound; the negro, on the other hand, has been no party to the contract which he is to be compelled to make, and he will look upon it only as an unjust command imposed upon him by superior power. The white apprentice was under the greatest obligation to his master, who had brought him from a country where his labour was of little value to one where it was in the greatest request, where even the wages he had agreed to receive placed him in an infinitely better condition than he had been in at home. Will the negro have any cause to be thankful to his master? He will be indebted to him only for months and years of cheerless and unrequited toil, and for repeated inflictions of a cruel and degrading punishment. The white man, if the claims of justice or gratitude had any influence over him, ought to have worked for his master; the negro will have a deep and rankling sense of the injustice of the demand upon his labour, and his back too probably will still be raw with the laceration of the cart-whip.

For these reasons, Sir, it appears to me quite impossible that, if by any chance my right hon. friend's plan could be carried into execution, it would be found to answer. But how is it to be brought into operation? My right hon. friend proposes that all the regulations which he suggests should be enacted by the authority of the British Parliament, and he says that there is no limit to the authority of Parliament to legislate for the colonies, but what Parliament itself has set. In strict law this doctrine may perhaps be correct, but it is one upon which it would be most dangerous to act. I consider that in giving free constitutions to the colonies, this country has, practically at least, given up all right to interfere in their internal legislation, except in cases of the very strongest necessity. Sir, I agree with my right hon. friend, that there is a case of necessity for interfering on the subject of slavery, but as in my opinion the right of interference arises from the necessity of the case, so I think by that necessity it is limited. I think that we have a right to say to the Colonial Legislatures: "You shall do full justice to all classes of the King's subjects;" but I do not think we have any right to prescribe the details of the laws by which the daily transactions of life in the colonies are to be regulated.

For this reason I think that my right hon. friend proposes to transgress the bounds of our right to legislate for the colonies; be this, however, as it may, I am convinced that unless he will proceed much further, he goes beyond our power to legislate with effect. Under a free constitution, as my right hon. friend is aware, the people are called upon to take a large share in the administration of the law, and a law to which they are generally opposed it is impossible to execute. How does he think that his Act of Parliament will be received in Jamaica? Will the assembly acknowledge its validity? Will Judges, paid by the assembly—Judges many of whom are themselves planters—pronounce it to be good? Will Juries, taken from the same class give verdicts against those by whom its provisions have been disobeyed?

Sir, if my right hon. friend will attempt to carry into execution such an Act of Parliament as he has described, it must contain a clause abrogating every constitutional privilege at present possessed by the colonies. It must indeed be a case of extreme necessity which could justify such a course, and even the most extreme case would with difficulty overcome my almost invincible repugnance to its adoption. But does that necessity exist? I know, Sir, that we cannot trust the colonial assemblies to legislate for a state of things in which the right of the planters to the gratuitous services of the labouring population shall be continued. If we were so to trust them, whatever might be the nominal effect of the laws they might pass, in reality they would amount to nothing less than the maintenance of slavery as it now exists.

But if we proceed upon a different principle, and declare that every man shall be alike entitled to the produce of his own labour, and to judge how that labour can be rendered most profitable to himself, we may safely trust the colonists to pass what laws they may consider necessary; while the great principle of allowing the value of labour to be determined by competition is adhered to, there can be no objection to any laws which they may pass, however severe may be the restrictions they impose.

Sir, my right hon. friend misunderstood my cheer of the observation which fell from him, that there was no competition by which to regulate the value of labour in Jamaica. I did not mean to deny, that such is, in a great measure at least, the case at present, but I meant that if my right hon. friend did not introduce the principle of competition, he would not in reality change the nature of the system; that competition was the essence of free labour; that there is no intermediate state between slavery and freedom.

The conclusion to which I have been irresistibly led by all the consideration I have given to this subject is, that there are only two possible courses which we can adopt with any show of reason, or with the least chance of success. We may either attempt to keep things as they are, or we may entirely get rid of every trace and vestige of the existing system, and endeavour to re-organize society upon better and sounder principles. My right hon. friend, however, has suggested a third course, to endeavour to put the slaves in a sort of state half free and half bond. Before we come to any conclusion upon this subject, it is necessary calmly to consider what is the choice presented to us, and what the comparative advantages or disadvantages of these different paths which lie before us for our choice.

The first of these modes of proceeding, the attempt to keep things as they are my right hon. friend has himself so eloquently shown to be altogether out of the question, that it is needless for me to detain the House by again attempting to prove a proposition he has so completely established. But, Sir, I think the House is hardly sufficiently aware how pressing is the necessity of a change of system, and how rapidly destructive in its operation is that which is now in force. Sir, my right hon. friend has stated how great has been the decrease of the population of our colonies collectively, and he has quoted certain returns from the colony of Demerara, in order to show that this decrease is occasioned by an over-exaction of labour from the slaves. This, Sir, is a conclusion of so much importance, that I think it necessary to support it by some further evidence. Sir, a variety of reasons have, at different times, been assigned for the decrease of the slave population, by those who have argued that it has not been occasioned by an excess of labour. It has more particularly been attributed to the disproportion of the sexes, which the time that has elapsed since the abolition of the slave trade has not yet been sufficient to correct, and to the licentious habits of the negroes.

Now, as to these, or any other similar reasons, which may be adduced for the decrease of the population, it is obvious that they must apply equally to all the slaves, however they may be employed; that their operation cannot peculiarly affect the slaves upon sugar estates, but must extend to the whole population. The truth is, that the slaves upon sugar estates are if any thing younger and stronger than the others, because sugar cultivation, requiring the largest capital, and yielding the largest profits, it has been carried on chiefly by the most wealthy proprietors, who could afford to give the largest prices for slaves. Now, Sir, taking all estates entirely or partially cultivated in sugar, I find that the whole number of slaves upon them in the year 1829, was 47,456, and that in this number the excess of males was 2,344, or rather less than five per cent. Among these slaves, in three years to May 1832, there were 2,828 births, or five and six-tenths per cent. The deaths were 5,573 or eleven and one-tenth per cent, making a decrease, in the time I have mentioned, of 2,745, or five and five-tenths per cent.

Taking the same three years, the slaves on cotton estates at the commencement of that period were 2,859; the excess of males was 145, being rather more than five per cent, instead of rather less than five per cent, as in the former instance. Amongst these slaves there were 237 births, or eight and one-tenth per cent; there were 188 deaths, or six and five-tenths per cent, the result being an increase of their numbers of forty-nine, or one and six-tenths per cent. From this statement it appears that there was a positive loss of population on the sugar estates of 2,745, whereas, had it gone on at the same rate as on the cotton estates, where there was rather a larger excess of males, there would have been an increase of 875, thus making the real loss of lives arising from sugar cultivation 3,620 in the space of three years.

The loss too upon sugar, as compared to cotton estates, is not, as might have been anticipated, principally occasioned by a failure of births, it is in a much greater degree to be attributed to an excess of deaths, since the comparison in respect of births is to the advantage of the cotton estates only to the extent of two and a-half per cent, while there is a difference of no less than four and seven-tenths per cent, in the number of deaths.

But, Sir, the real cause of this frightful waste of life may be rendered yet more apparent. I have a list in my hand of no less than twenty-six sugar estates, on each of which, notwithstanding an excess of females, there has been a loss, varying from one or two in the whole number, to no less than a seventh of the population; the diminution which has taken place in the case of the plantation Vreeden Hoop, where the population has fallen in three years from 553 to 472; being a loss of eighty-one. Nor is this all; I can bring yet more directly home to over-exaction of labour, this decrease of the population. I have here an extract from a sworn return made to the Court of Policy, for the purpose of taxation, showing the numbers of slaves, and the amount of produce on different estates in Demerara. The first which I will mention is a favourable instance. On the estate of Anna Regina, I find that the average number of slaves for the three years, 1829, 30, and 31, was 793, that the average quantity of sugar produced was 875,866 lbs., being for each negro about 1,104 lbs. On this estate the increase in the two years* which had elapsed between the first return and the last, was twenty-eight, or nearly two per cent per annum.

On Maria's Pleasure the average number of slaves in the same three years, was 327, the average crop of sugar was

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* These returns being made up annually. so as to show the crop produced, and the number of slaves for the current year, the returns for three years only give an interval of two years.

689,195 lbs., being 2,107 lbs. for each slave; not much less than double of what was produced on Anna Regina; and here, instead of an increase in the number of slaves, which had taken place when the produce per head was only 1,104 lbs., there was a falling-off of no less than thirty-five in the two years; being nearly at the rate of five per cent per annum. On the estate of Nismes, the average number of slaves was 297, the average crop of sugar 643,450 lbs., or 2,166 lbs. for each slave. Here, again, the decrease in two years was seventeen, or nearly three per cent per annum. On Success, the result is nearly similar; and lastly, on Vreeden Hoop,* the estate belonging to Mr. Gladstone, to which I have already referred, the average number of slaves was 516, the average of sugar was 1,009,916lbs., or for each negro 1,955 lbs; and the decrease of population in two years was forty-six, or nearly four and a-half per cent per annum.

Sir, the most striking fact of all yet remains to be mentioned. I have said, that in the years 1829-30-31, a comparatively small crop had been produced upon Anna Regina, to the great advantage of the slaves, who had been increasing in numbers, (as indeed they had done during the previous five or six years). On Vreeden Hoop, on the other hand, I have shown that a large crop had been produced, to the great advantage of the owner, but unhappily, at the price of a dreadful loss of life amongst the slaves. Now, Sir, in the autumn of 1831, for what reason it is not for me to say, as I cannot know the motives by which men are actuated, the manager of Anna Regina was removed, and the owner, Mr. Moss, of Liverpool, committed the estate to the charge of the same attorney who had also the care of Vreeden Hoop, and in the six months which followed this transfer, it appeared, on making up the triennial registration in May, 1832, that there had been a loss of five in the number of the slaves. In the tax-roll of the Court of Policy for 1831, which I have already quoted, the estate is entered as having 805 slaves, while the number returned to the registrar in May, 1832, is only 800. Now, Sir, I think this fact throws much light on the causes of that loss of life which takes place on sugar plantations. By far the greater number of estates in the West Indies, and more especially in Demerara, belong to non-resident proprietors, and are managed by persons having no permanent interest in them. Now, I do not believe that overseers and attorneys are by nature more cruel or less averse to inflicting unnecessary pain on their fellow-creatures than other men; but, Sir, there is great competition amongst them for employment, and they find, by experience, that the owners at a distance are better acquainted with the result of their management, as to the profit produced, than as to the comfort and welfare of the negroes; and the consequence is, that amongst persons in this situation in life, the object of emulation is, who shall produce the largest crops at the smallest expense.*

Sir, I have entered into these details, as I think they do prove to demonstration, the fearful consequences of the present system. Nor, Sir, is my mind so much affected by the loss of life, great as it is, amounting, as I have shown, in a single colony, to upwards of 1,000 annually, as by the reflection of the long-protracted torture of which these deaths are the consequence, of the hopeless and cheerless misery, under which not only the actual victims, but the whole slave population are thus shown to be languishing. Sir, when I consider this, I do indeed agree with my right hon. friend that the system must be abolished; and it remains to be decided whether this shall be done at once, or gradually, as my right hon. friend has proposed. He says the question is, how the object may most safely be accomplished, and I am willing to place it upon this issue. The mode of proceeding which I recommend, is at once to fix a date for the absolute and entire termination of slavery. Let us say on what day the slaves are to be free, and to be released from all claim upon their labour on the part of others; and let this day be no further removed than may be necessary, to enable the Colonial Legislatures, to adopt such measures as may ensure regular industry. Such is the course I venture to propose to the House. I do not mean to say that it is safe; but I contend that it is attended with less danger than would attend the adoption of the plan of my right hon. friend, and I will endeavour to state, as fairly as I can, what are the dangers to be apprehended in either case.

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* This is a less unfavourable statement than might have been made of the state of things on Vreeden Hoop, but I have thought it right to give the decrease in the number of slaves as it appears in the returns from which I have taken the amount of the crop produced. This return shows, that in the two years from the close of 1829 to the close of 1831, there had been a loss of forty-six. But it appears from the triennial registration, that, in the longer period, from May 1829, to May 1832, the loss had been as above stated, eighty-one.

* I have learnt, with very sincere regret, that the above statement as to the change of management on the estate of Anna Regina, has appeared to Mr. Moss to be calculated to create an impression, that he is indifferent to the welfare of his slaves. Nothing could be further from my intention than to convey any such imputation; on the contrary, I have always heard that Mr. Moss is a proprietor distinguished for his humanity, and his anxiety for the comfort of his slaves. This report is confirmed by the written instructions to his attorney, which Mr. Moss has been good enough to show me, and which do him the highest honour; but the more personally humane Mr. Moss is, the more striking is the illustration afforded by the circumstances I have mentioned of my argument, that proprietors in this country know less of the treatment of their slaves, than of the amount of profit derived from them; that this fact is known to the overseers and attorneys in the colony, and that it necessarily produces an effect on their conduct.

I have endeavoured to show that it is doubtful whether the British Parliament has the right to pass laws, prescribing a complicated system of internal regulations to the colonists, and that if we have in strictness of law such a right, we cannot practically exercise it with effect, without going much further and depriving the colonists of those privileges, which would enable them successfully to resist the execution of such a law, the force of which they certainly would not acknowledge.

For this reason, it appears to me, that Parliament should go no further than to fix a date for the termination of slavery, naming such a period, as not unnecessarily to prolong, what must be the very dangerous interval, between the announcement, and the accomplishment, of so great a change in the existing relations of society, and yet to allow to the Colonial Legislature the time which would be necessary for passing such laws as the altered state of things would require.

What, then, are the dangers to which the adoption of this course would give rise? I shall be told that it would lead to a struggle between the slaves and their masters, or at all events to the emancipation of the former, without any arrangement having been made to control and keep them in order. Sir, I believe that the former result would be impossible, and that even the latter would be unlikely to occur.

Were such an Act of the British Parliament as I have supposed to be passed, I believe the colonists would see the utter inutility of thinking of opposition, and that the encouragement and assistance we should have it in our power to afford to those colonies which should choose to cooperate with us in facilitating a change of system, which at all events they would be unable to prevent, would induce most at least of the Local Legislatures to do so. Much, I think, might be expected from the proprietors resident in this country, who seeing their interests at stake, and that irretrievable ruin must result from an obstinate and useless resistance, would probably make use of that influence, which, if they choose to act with vigour and with union, they have the means of exercising, over their servants and agents in the colonies.

But suppose that this reasonable expectation should be disappointed—that the colonists should be so infatuated as to resist to the last the declared will of this country, and that the day fixed by Parliament for the termination of slavery should arrive, without any precaution having been adopted, what, let me ask, would be the consequence?

The cultivation of sugar would, I admit, in all probability, be put an end to, as my right hon. friend has anticipated; the Negroes would find so little difficulty in procuring land, that they would generally do so, and as, by moderate labour upon their own ground, for thirty or forty days in the year, they would be able to maintain themselves with more comfort than they have been used to, they would, I have no doubt, in general, refuse to work for wages. Such is the result which is, I think, to be expected in the event I have supposed; it is one of which I am far from denying the evils, since it would be productive of extensive pecuniary distress, and would, I believe be prejudicial to the true interests of the Negroes themselves; but when we are considering the worst that can happen, in the event of the obstinate resistance of the colonists, to the views of the mother country on the subject of slavery, the evils I have described are as nothing compared to those which have been predicted, and which might, I believe, be produced by a different course. At least, Sir, there is nothing in the state of things I have described which is calculated to lead to bloodshed; the slaves would have obtained all they can desire; why, therefore should they be guilty of any acts of violence? As to the masters, on the other hand, I know not in what manner any conduct of theirs is likely to lead to collision between them and the negroes.

We are told, that they will resist, by force, the execution of the law giving freedom to the slaves; but have hon. Members considered the possibility of such resistance? Why, Sir, slavery depends for its existence, from hour to hour, on the support of the military power of this country: this is the very breath of its being, which, if withdrawn, it would perish at the instant; no active interference on our part is necessary in order to put down slavery; we have but to refuse to uphold it, and from that moment it is at an end. At this late hour I will not trouble the House by doing so, or I should have wished to read a letter which I hold in my hand, giving a most dramatic description of a mutiny which occurred a few months ago on an estate in Antigua, which shows, in the most striking manner, how entirely dependent slavery is upon the constant support of a military force. The slaves upon this estate, in a body, refused to work, or to suffer the punishment which was ordered to be inflicted upon the first who did so! Under these circumstances, what was the resource of the manager? Why, Sir, he made the best of his way to St. John's, and having obtained from the Governor the assistance of two companies of infantry, he returned to the estate, and having drawn up the soldiers in the front of the negro house, with loaded muskets and fixed bayonets, he called out the slaves, had a severe punishment inflicted on the ringleaders in the revolt, and thus succeeded in restoring order. But if, when by the authority of the Imperial Legislature, the slaves are released from the obligation to serve the planter, the latter shall refuse to acknowledge the force of this decree, what steps is he to take to compel the negroes to continue to submit to his authority?

When summoned to their accustomed work, they will treat the command with derision, and will proceed to amuse or occupy themselves according to their different tastes; will the manager with the two or three book-keepers he has to assist him attempt with the whip to enforce the obedience of 200 or 300 negroes? and if not what will he do? Military assistance he will have none to reckon upon, since the British troops, I presume, will be more likely to obey the authority of the King, and of the Imperial Parliament, than than of the Assembly of Jamaica.

The cessation of sugar cultivation is, then, I conclude, the worst result which is to be anticipated from our being compelled to put an end to slavery, without having the assistance of the Colonial Legislatures. What, on the other hand, are the dangers to be apprehended from adopting the course recommended by my right hon. friend? The danger which it is said attends complete emancipation, arises from the probability that the Colonial Legislatures may refuse to come into such a scheme; but are they likely to agree to that of my right hon. friend?—and if not, can you compel them to acquiesce? To carry into effect this plan, it is not sufficient merely to abstain from giving your support to the existing system; you must, either by persuasion, or by force, procure the active support of the colonists, to another complicated system which is to be substituted for it. If we have to appeal to force, will the negroes be tranquil spectators of a struggle upon such a subject? Sir, I fear no man can suppose so. On the other hand, for the reasons I have already stated, I believe that, even if we had the zealous and active co-operation of the colonists, sugar cultivation would be arrested by the impossibility of obtaining effective labour from the negroes under such a system. But this, though the worst, and, I believe, not the probable result of the entire abolition of slavery, is by no means the worst that can happen, if the proposal of my right hon. friend is adopted; on the contrary, the breaking up of the whole system, without an actual convulsion, is, I think, the best issue to be looked for from such a state of things, and one which I, at least, should not be sanguine enough to anticipate. Should my right hon. friend succeed in bringing his plan into active operation—should he be fortunate enough to overcome all the difficulties I have already described, what will be the effect produced upon the minds of the slaves? They are to be told that they are free; and, at the same time, that they must still go on, as heretofore, labouring for their masters, and receiving, in return, only the commonest necessaries of life! What is the grievance of which they now complain? not that they have to labour, but that their labour is unrewarded; and of the redress of this grievance, my right hon. friend proposes that they should have only a distant prospect. It is true, that during one-fourth of the day, the negroes are to labour on their own account; but what they earn, even in this portion of their time, is not to be at their own disposal; it is to be taken from them in order to accumulate, for the payment of a debt which they will feel they do not justly owe; and till the expiration of twelve years, they will derive no advantage whatever from it. Sir, twelve years is a long time in the life of any man, and it will appear endless to an ignorant slave, accustomed to think chiefly of the present hour, and rarely, if ever, to look beyond the succeeding week, or the succeeding month. What, then, I again ask, will be the effect upon his mind, when he is told that he is free, but finds that, for so long a period, his freedom is to make no difference whatever in his condition—that he is to go on labouring as before, without receiving any remuneration for his toil, beyond his accustomed and scanty supply of necessaries?

Perhaps, my right hon. friend will say, that his condition will be improved, that he will no longer have to fear the infliction of punishment at the caprice of his master. Sir, for the reasons I have already stated, I greatly doubt whether this change will really be for his good. If punishment by the authority of the Magistrate is to be depended upon for enforcing the performance of labour, I fear its severity must be much greater than what is now commonly inflicted, in order to produce its effect; but grant that in this respect my right hon. friend should not be disappointed, will the check imposed upon the cart whip satisfy the negroes? Sir, to answer that question I will refer my right hon. friend to the evidence collected with respect to the recent insurrection in Jamaica; he will find, that both planters and missionaries concur in stating, that the leaders of the revolt were almost universally slaves who had nothing to complain of on the score of personal treatment; the same fact is proved by the confession of the rebels themselves. The slave gardener, one of the chief instigators of the insurrection, in his confession says, "If Dove (another of the leaders) and I were to be stripped, our skins would be found as smooth as any white man's, for we have never been flogged." Nor is this difficult to be accounted for; the head men upon the estates, the drivers and principal mechanics, the petty officers, if I may use that expression, are seldom flogged, and these men being naturally selected from the most intelligent slaves, it is of course upon their minds, that the injustice of the claim of their masters to their gratuitous services, makes the strongest impression, whilst they are also those best fitted to lead their fellows in an attempt to obtain their freedom by force. Now, Sir, to those slaves whose hostility is the most dangerous, the measure which my right hon. friend has proposed will be no relief whatever, on the contrary, they will consider it as at once a recognition of the injustice of the present system, and an avowal of our determination to continue it; the measure itself is formed upon an admission that slavery, (that is, the forced labour of one man for the benefit of another), involves a violation of justice and of natural equity; will not then the more intelligent of the slaves be ready enough to say, "If this is so, why are we for twelve years more to work without being paid, let us obtain by force the full restoration of our rights instead of this mockery of justice?" Sir, in the present state of feeling amongst the slaves in Jamaica, it appears to me, that an attempt to execute the scheme of my right hon. friend would be almost a certain signal for revolt; and I ask the House, are British troops and British officers to be employed in slaughtering men for resistance under such provocation?

Sir, I have heard strong language used in this House in praise of the efforts made by the Poles to recover their national liberty. I have heard the conduct of Russia condemned in no measured terms for having by military force put down and punished the insurgents. But if the cause of the Poles was just, what shall we say of that of the Negroes in the case I have supposed. The Poles fought for political liberty, which I trust I do not undervalue, but which I must still consider, when compared to personal freedom, as a mere speculative advantage; the struggle of the Negroes would be to be allowed in peace to enjoy the fruits of their own industry—to be relieved at once from a claim acknowledged by those who impose it, to be too unjust to be permanently maintained.

Sir, I ask what hon. Gentleman is there in this House, who has joined in the general condemnation of the conduct of Russia, who could vote supplies for carrying on such a contest with the negroes?

Whatever course we pursue, it is not impossible that an insurrection may take place. Justice has been so long delayed, that it may be, that a servile war is inevitable; but Sir, if we grant to the negroes, all that they have a right to ask, and they still break out into rebellion, we shall have, in the melancholy necessity of shedding their blood, the consolation of knowing that this necessity, has not been occasioned by a denial of justice. But if the struggle arises from an attempt to force them to submit to the exaction of unrequited labour, shall we not again be in the situation, of which the American war is the only other example in our history, in which no friend to justice and humanity can wish well to the arms of his country?

Sir, I trust the House will not be induced to adopt a course which may lead to so dreadful a result, and that we shall at once proceed to restore to the negroes the full enjoyment of their rights as men.

Such a course, I am convinced for the reasons I have stated, is in every point of view the most expedient, and attended with the smallest danger. I do not pretend that it is safe, but as being less dangerous than any other, I most earnestly recommend it; and even, Sir, were the balance of danger less decidedly in its favour, believing that it is alone consistent with the eternal rules of right and wrong, and with the first principles of justice, I should be prepared to adopt it, committing the issue not without anxiety, but with humble confidence, to the disposal of an all-wise and over-ruling Providence.

Sir *Robert Peel* did not rise for the purpose of prolonging, or of even entering upon the discussion, as he thought it would be most inconvenient to do so at that stage of the debate and at so late an hour of the night; but he rose merely for the purpose of suggesting the necessity of coming to some understanding as to some practical course to be adopted with regard to the discussion of these Resolutions. Whilst he admitted the necessity of coming to an early decision on this important subject, he must at the same time deprecate a premature or hasty one. It was absolutely necessary that some further time should be given for the consideration of these Resolutions. The right hon. Gentleman had not confined himself to vague suggestions, but had actually suggested a specific plan for altering the condition of slaves; but that plan was so complicated, that it would be impossible to discuss its principle without going into its details. One thing he hoped, and it was this, that the House would not adopt even one of the Resolutions, without allowing time for its discussion and modification if necessary. It must be acknowledged that the question of emancipation of slaves stood upon new grounds from the moment it was proposed to Parliament by Government. He did not infer from what had occurred that there was any indifference on the part of the right hon. Gentleman to the unspeakable importance of this subject, or to the necessity of allowing time for its discussion; but, at the same time, he hoped that his Majesty's Ministers would not ask a vote or single decision upon any of the Resolutions until further time were allowed for considering the subject in all its details. Whilst he asked for a postponement, he did not wish for an indefinite one, but that a convenient day should be fixed for resuming this discussion.

Lord *Althorp* would remind the House that his right hon. friend had, in opening the debate, stated his readiness to agree to the postponement of the debate, if it were the wish of the House, or of any hon. Member who wished to take a part in the discussion. It was reasonable, not only on account of Members but on account of the public, who took a deep interest in this subject, that a postponement should be required and he was therefore willing to accede. Perhaps the best way would be to report the Resolutions, *pro forma;* and by that means there would be an opportunity afforded to print them. He could assure the House that he had not the least idea of taking an advantage of any hon. Member, but his wish was, that the Resolutions might be reported, with the understanding that no person was thereby pledged to vote for them. With respect to the day for renewing the discussion, he thought the most convenient time would be the first open day after the Whitsun holidays, which would be Thursday, the 30th of this month.

Mr. *Fowell Buxton* did not think it fair that the speech of the right hon. Secretary should go forth to the world unanswered. It was true the noble Lord near him had replied to several points in that speech, but that which he thought a most important point still remained unexplained. If the negro were to be called upon to pay for his own liberation, he, for one, must oppose such a proposition. He, therefore, wished to know whether the negro was to pay for his own emancipation, or whether the 15,000,000*l.* to be raised in this country was to be applied to that purpose?

Lord *Althorp* thought his right hon. friend had been sufficiently explicit when he stated, that the slave would be allowed time to raise the price of his own emancipation, but, at the same time, he had left it to the discretion of the House to say whether they would exact from the slaves the payment for that emancipation.

Sir *Robert Peel* did not offer his suggestion to the House with any other view than that of allowing time for deliberation. The House would recollect that some of those Gentlemen who were interested for the planters had an opportunity of speaking and they had as much right to complain of delay as the hon. Gentleman opposite.

Mr. *Godson* said, on the part of the West India planters, that they had no objection to an immediate hearing. They had no desire whatever for a postponement. Some of the merchants of London were, however, in a different situation. They had orders to execute for shipment of several millions' worth of British goods to the West Indies: but one of those Resolutions went to regulate the supply of certain articles which were to be used by negroes; and, until that clause was disposed of, the merchants could not, with safety, send out the usual shipments.

Mr. Secretary *Stanley* could assure the hon. and learned Gentleman that the Resolution to which he had referred would not in any way affect the interests of the merchants concerned in the trade to the West Indies. His object was, to give that body a full opportunity of disposing of their shipments, and he was sure that no resolution or clause would be adopted which would interfere with their interests. As to the discussion, he was prepared to enter upon it immediately, but he thought it fairer to allow all the parties interested in the issue of it, full time for inquiry and deliberation.

Mr. *Godson* said, that although there were but a very few Members in the House who were connected with the colonies, they were willing to go on at once with the debate, and on their part he would say that delay or postponement could only have for its object the promulgation of such statements as had been made in the brilliant speech of the right hon. Secretary—statements which, though unfounded, would be thus circulated without an answer.

Sir *Robert Peel* had only spoken for himself. And whatever opinions the hon. and learned Gentleman might entertain as to the effects of his suggestions, he must be allowed to say, that he had no other object and could have no other object, than to obtain that attentive consideration of the subject which would be most satisfactory to all parties.

Sir *Richard Vyvyan* said, the great inconvenience of delay was, that the statements of the right hon. Secretary would go forth uncontradicted, although he (Sir Richard Vyvyan) could easily give a satisfactory refutation to many of them, particularly to those misrepresentations respecting the Island of Jamaica.

The Resolutions were reported to the House *pro forma*, and ordered to be printed and taken into consideration on the 30th of May.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Wednesday, May 15, 1833.

MINUTES.] Petitions presented. By the Earls of CHICHESTER, FITZWILLIAM, RADNOR, and AIRLIE, and Lords BEXLEY, SUFFIELD, and SEGRAVE, from a great Number of Places,—against Slavery.—By the Earl of AIRLIE, from the Provincial Synod of Angus and Mearns, from the Kirk Session of Dundee, and from Guthrie, for a Better System of Church Patronage in Scotland; and from the Provincial Synod of Angus and Mearns, for Church Reform in Ireland.—By Earl FITZWILLIAM, from three Places, against the Corn Laws.—By the Duke of RICHMOND, from Brighton, for the Abolition or Amendment of the Sale of Beer Act.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, May 15, 1833.

MINUTES.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of Mr. HUME, an Account of the Salaries and Emoluments of the Judge, and other Officers of the High Court of Admiralty: also of the Names and Time of Service of the different Ambassadors and Secretaries of Embassy from this Court to Turkey, since January, 1827: also an Account of the Number of Persons Officially Employed by each Member of his Majesty's Treasury, and the Salary and Emoluments enjoyed by each Person so Employed in the years 1832, 1833: also an Account of the Pensions paid at the Treasury, for which 14,000*l.* is required in the Estimates on the Table: also an Account of the Manner in which 38,193*l.* voted in 1832, for defraying Contingent Expenses, and for Messengers, have been Expended: also how the Sum of 22,000*l.* voted for the Expenses of the Houses of Lords and Commons, in 1832, and also the Arrears of 3,500*l.* were Expended: also an Account of the Manner in which 12,624*l.*, voted in 1832, for defraying the Expenses of the Insolvent Debtors' Court, were Expended, as also of the total Amount of Fees received in that Court: also an Account of the total Amount received for, and forming the Fee Funds in the several Offices in his Majesty's Treasury, in the year 1832, and the Manner of its Appropriation: also an Account of the Funds belonging to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, for defraying the Charge and Salaries of the Professors, in aid of which the House has hitherto voted Money, and is called upon to grant further Sums.

Petitions presented. By Mr. SINCLAIR, from St. George's, Hanover Square; by Mr. SPRY, from Bodmin, and other Places; and by Mr. LANGSTON, from St. Clement's, Oxford,—against the Assessed Taxes.—By Sir H. PARNELL, from Dundee; and Mr. DUNLOP, from Rutherglen, —against the Royal Burgh (Scotland) Bill.—By Colonel WILLIAMS, from the Members of the Subscription Library at Brighton, against the Duty on Newspapers.—By Mr. EWART, from Liverpool, against Mr. STURGES BOURNE'S

Act.—By Major BEAUCLERK, from Wimbledon; and by Lord G. LENNOX, from Oving,—against Tithes.—By Mr. CAYLEY, from Tadcaster, for the Repeal of the Malt Tax and Assessed Taxes.—By Sir J. JOHNSTONE, from Scarborough, for an Inquiry into the State of the British Shipping interest.—By Mr. J. FIELDEN, from Blackburn, against the Irish Church Temporalities Bill.—By Mr. CAYLEY, and Sir B. W. GUISE, from several Places, —for a Repeal of the Malt Tax.—By Mr. SINCLAIR, from several Places in Scotland, for Amending the Existing System of Church Patronage in Scotland.—By Mr. O'CONNELL, from Balmerino, for Relief to Ireland; from the Saddlers of Dublin, and from Enniscorthy and Templeshannon, for a Repeal of the Union; from Strathmiglo, for the Abolition of the Church of Ireland as connected with the State; and from two Places, against Tithes and Church Cess: also from several Parishes in Dublin, and other Places; and by Mr. F. O'CONNOR, from Ballymoney, and Kenneigh,—against the Suppression of Disturbances (Ireland) Bill.—By Mr. WYNN ELLIS, from a Dissenting Congregation, Liverpool; and by Colonel WILLIAMS, from the Dissenters of Ashton-under-Lyne, for Relief to the Dissenters, from their present Grievances.—By Mr. J. OSWALD, and Mr. DUNLOP, from the Handloom Weavers of several Places, for the Appointment of a Board of Trade to Regulate Wages.—By Mr. OLIPHANT, and Mr. J. OSWALD, from Perth and Galston, against the Corn Laws.—By Sir H. PARNELL, from Maryborough; and Mr. SINCLAIR, from Armagh, for substituting a Solemn Affirmation for an Oath.—By Sir H. PARNELL, from the Coach Proprietors and Postmasters, on the Lines of Road between London, Worcester, &c., that the same Principle of Taxation may be applied to both Rail-roads and Common-roads; and from Dundee, for certain Alterations in the Law of Scotland.—By Mr. O'CONNELL, from Dublin; Mr. ROEBUCK, from Bath; Mr. SINCLAIR, from Brighton; and Mr. COLLIER, from Plymouth,—for granting to the Inhabitants of Corporate Towns the Right of Electing their own Municipal and Local Magistrates.—By Mr. FINCH, from Stamford; Mr. BRODIE, from Salisbury; and Mr. WIGNEY, from Brighton —for the Repeal or Amendment of the Sale of Beer Act.—By Mr. ROEBUCK, Mr. O'CONNELL, and Sir W. MOLESWORTH, from several Places,—against Tithes.—By Sir R. INGLIS, Sir JOHN ASTLEY, Lord MORPETH, Sir H. PARNELL, Sir W. GUISE, Lord G. LENNOX, Lord G. BENTINCK, Lord LUMLEY, Colonel DAVIES, Sir W. MOLESWORTH, Colonel TORRENS, Major FANCOURT, Lord DALMENY, and Messrs. A. JOHNSTON, GULLY, HURST, EWART, DILLWYN, ROPER, COLLIER, WEYLAND, H. A. FELLOWES, CHICHESTER, RAMSBOTTOM, CAYLEY, SINCLAIR, O'CONNELL, WYNN ELLIS, J. OSWALD, BANNERMAN, J. MARTIN, WHITMORE, PHILIPS, TODD, and HORNBY, from a great Number of Places,—against Slavery.—By Lord MORPETH, Lord G. BENTINCK, Sir R. INGLIS, Sir EARDLEY WILMOT, Sir ANDREW AGNEW, Sir ROBERT SIMEON, Sir W. GUISE, Colonel G. WILLIAMS, Messrs. A. JOHNSTON, HOPE, WEYLAND, STRUTT, and SINCLAIR, from a Number of Places,—for the Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By Mr. OLIPHANT, from Perth, for Amending the Scotch Law of Bankruptcy.—By Mr. CLAY, from St. Paul's, Deptford, for Relief from the General Distress, and from the Expense of the Metropolitan Police.—By Mr. BANNERMAN, from Aberdeen, for a Revision of the Apothecaries Act.—By Mr. J. MARTIN, from Sligo, for Substituting a Solemn Affirmation for an Oath.—By Lord MORPETH, from Leeds, against the Corn Laws.—By Sir JOHN ASTLEY, from Bristow, against the Malt Tax.—By Mr. HORNBY, from Warrington, for Transferring the Assizes from Lancaster to the former Place; and for Relief to the Dissenters from their present Grievances.—By Mr. HORNBY, from Warrington; Mr. CLAY, from St. Mary's, Whitechapel; and Mr. TODD, from Honiton, against the Assessed Taxes.—By Sir R. INGLIS, from the Dean and Chapter of Ely, against the Church Temporalities (Ireland) Bill.—By Lord MORPETH, Mr. HORNBY, and Sir R. INGLIS, from several Places,—for Amending the Sale of Beer Act.

ABOLITION OF SLAVERY.] Sir *Richard Vyvyan* took the opportunity, upon the presentation of some Petitions against negro slavery, of giving a positive contradiction to some of the statements made by the right hon. Secretary for the Colonies, in the course of his speech to the House last night. That right hon. Gentleman had stated, that the recommendations of Government had been totally disregarded by the slave-owners in the West Indies, and the colonial legislatures, and applied the observation more particularly to the island of Jamaica. This statement was incorrect, for the legislature there had passed an Act in the year 1832, whereby the evidence of the slave was not only admitted against his master, but also against the overseer. Another of the allegations made by the right hon. Gentleman was, that the evidence of the slave could only be received clogged with the recommendation of his master. But this allegation had reference to one part of the colonies only, the island of Antigua. It was also most erroneously stated that a slave could receive thirty-nine lashes for only looking his master in the face.

Mr. *Hume* rose to order. That was not the proper period to answer a debate which took place on a former occasion.

The *Speaker* was of opinion, that the hon. Baronet was not strictly out of order. It was for him to consider how far the course he was pursuing promoted the convenience of the House.

Sir *Richard Vyvyan* was merely anxious to negative allegations which had been brought against a most respectable body of men by the Secretary and Under-Secretary for the Colonies, and which ought not to be suffered to go forth to the public without a contradiction on the earliest opportunity. The right hon. Secretary was misinformed with regard to the corporal punishment of the negroes. He knew many instances in which a much heavier punishment than the infliction of thirty-nine stripes had been visited upon those who had inflicted a very small corporal punishment upon an offending slave. Instances had occurred in the colonies of 100*l.* having been handed over to the overseer for the manumission of a slave who had been ill-treated. If these facts had not been brought forward at the present moment, it would operate very much to the injury of justice. Justice he wished to be done to all parties, and surely justice was due to those individuals whose property must greatly suffer by the ministerial propositions.

Lord *Morpeth* was not prepared to answer the observations of the hon. Baronet, but he was well satisfied that his right hon. friend would have no difficulty on the subject, if he were present. The allegation made by his right hon. friend with respect to the power of a master to inflict thirty-nine stripes on his slave, was, in fact, the statement of a West-India proprietor.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, that the knowledge of which he was possessed on the subject came from the evidence laid before both Houses of Parliament. The question in dispute seemed to be whether a West-Indian slave master could inflict thirty-nine lashes on a negro for a certain offence, and the evidence of a West-India proprietor, and of other men, stated clearly that he could. An overseer could not only administer thirty-nine lashes for looking him in the face, he could do so without assigning any reason. That he could inflict corporal punishment either with or without assigning any reason had been proved upon authority which did not admit of a doubt. The fact was so revolting to every feeling of humanity, that the House would not be imbued with a particle of sympathy if a law were not immediately passed to render it impossible for one human being to strike another with impunity.

Colonel *Leith Hay* was enabled to corroborate the assertions of the hon. Baronet by his own personal observation. The statements of the right hon. Secretary, he did not hesitate to say, were greatly exaggerated. The allegations were made upon evidence which the right hon. Gentleman believed to be true, but that evidence was of a most exaggerated description. He thought an *ex parte* statement, armed with the powerful eloquence of the right hon. Secretary, and the feeling that existed out of doors at the present moment on the subject of slavery, without any expression of the sentiments of the House upon the subject, ought not to be permitted to reach the public ear without the earliest contradiction.

Mr. *Harvey* said, that this meeting, for the purpose of presenting the petitions of the people, was worth nothing if a responsible Minister was not present to hear the complaints of the country. He very much regretted the absence of every Minister on the present occasion. It was disgraceful to any Ministry that the petitions should thus, day after day, be ludicrously consigned to the bag. He very much approved of conversational debates of this description. It gave every individual an opportunity of expressing an opinion, and asking any question he might think necessary, and which he must be prevented from doing on the occasion of a set debate, when the whole time was consumed by a few prepared speeches each three or four hours' long. The question he was anxious to put to the Government was, whether the scheme of emancipation was to go hand-in-hand with compensation; or whether emancipation was to be carried without compensation? And if it was not, he wished to know from what quarter compensation was to come? He understood from the speech of a noble Lord, who had filled the office of Under-Secretary, until within a very short period, that he had spent two years in maturing a plan for the emancipation of the slaves, which differed in many important particulars from the scheme produced by the right hon. Secretary in a very short space of time; and he wished to know why the plans of that noble Lord were not submitted to the House as well as the Resolutions of the right hon. Secretary? Conversations of this description tended to elucidate facts much better than luminous and elaborate speeches, and he, therefore, regretted that no Minister was present to answer the inquiries of hon. Members; it was certainly a part of the original agreement between Ministers and the House.

Mr. *Petre* said, that the statements which had gone forth were not in any degree exaggerated. The House and the country had heard repeatedly of worse instances than any which were last night mentioned by the right hon. Secretary, who had, indeed, shown great forbearance in not alluding to individual cases.

The Conversation dropped.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS — SLIGO.] Mr. John Martin (of Sligo) presented a Petition from Sligo, complaining of certain abuses which existed in the Corporation.

Colonel *Perceval* said, he trusted that he should be excused if he trespassed on the time of the House, while he showed that the petition which complained of the Sligo Corporation contained gross and calumnious falsehoods, as applied to a most estimable person; he meant his very respected friend, Mr. Wynne, who is a proprietor of certain tolls in the town, who is a constant resident in the country, and whose example he heartily wished other proprietors would follow. The petition stated that this respectable gentleman had appropriated a part of the Corporation funds to his own personal use. Now, he would say, that this was an unfounded and gross mis-statement, for the fact was, that the tolls of the town were let to the highest bidder, and were not sufficient to pay the bailiffs and other officers in the conservation of the peace of the town; and his respected friend, as the proprietor of the principal part of the town, had paid 100*l.* a-year to the provost. It was too bad that these petitions should bring forward charges which were in no way founded in fact; and he would call on the hon. member for the town of Sligo, to state whether he had ever known an instance of any of the Corporation funds having been applied to the personal benefit of his very esteemed friend. The petition mixed up Corporation property with certain tolls, the right to which latter property had been purchased by Mr. Wynne. The Corporation had no more control over the tolls than they had over his (Colonel Perceval's) estate. He would ask why then should these tolls be brought forward as a Corporation abuse? As regarded the non-residence of the burgesses, the hon. Gentleman must be aware that by the Reform Bill freemen of towns are considered as residents, if they reside within seven miles of the place for which they vote. The Corporation consisted of thirteen persons, eleven of whom were, under the Reform Bill, actually residents; and, therefore, it was not fair to say, that the burgesses were non-resident. It was further stated in the petition that the freemen were not elected to office in the mode which they ought to be. By the charter of the town it was provided, that these corporate offices should be elected by the burgesses, and until the charter were superseded, or the law altered; the manner of electing the officers of the Corporation must remain vested in the same parties. The petition alleged, moreover, that many influential persons had applied to be admitted to the freedom of the town, and had been refused the boon by the Corporation. He remembered the case of Mr. Abraham Martin, who applied to the provost and burgesses to be admitted to the freedom of the Corporation, and he knew that they thought proper to refuse him. Mr. Martin then brought the matter before the King's Bench, and the result was, his application was refused on the ground that the Corporation could not be compelled to accede to his demand. He had felt it his duty to trespass on the time of the House by dwelling at some length on the contents of the petition presented by the hon. Member (Mr. Martin), because he felt sure that the House would not refuse a hearing to any Gentleman who stood up in his place, to offer a justification of a highly respectable individual against the most unfounded calumnies.

Mr. *John Martin* stated, in reply, that neither himself nor any person who signed the petition, intended to cast a reflection upon the character of Mr. Wynne. But did the hon. Member mean to say, that the borough had not been appropriated to his private purposes?

Colonel *Perceval* asked, what private advantages was meant by the hon. Member?

Mr. *John Martin*: Selling it. In fact, so little did some of the Representatives of that borough know of the place they represented, that one of them represented it in the House as "a little fishing villa in the south of Ireland." The hon. Member was proceeding to put another question to the hon. Member (Colonel Perceval) when

Sir Robert Bateson rose to order. Such interrogatories were irregular; they ought at least to be put through the Chair.

The petition was referred to the Committee on Corporations.

Case of Baron de Bode.] Mr. *Hill* presented a Petition from the Baron de Bode, praying for an inquiry into his claim on the funds received by the British Government, under the convention, for the paying off British claimants. In support of the petition the hon. Member urged at considerable length the claims of the petitioner, on the ground that he was a British-born subject, and that the only defect of his claim was a mere technical one of non-registration. He moved that it be referred to a Committee to examine and report upon the claims of the petitioner.

The *Attorney General* opposed the Motion on the ground that the case had been already sufficiently heard and justly decided upon. The hon. and learned Gentleman was proceeding to address some further observations to the House on this subject, when he was interrupted by

Sir *John Tyrell*, who said, that as the question was likely to lead to some debate, he thought it ought to be discussed in a fuller House. He moved that the House be counted.

The House counted out.

* * *

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, May 16, 1833.

Minutes.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of Mr. O'Connell, the Order made on November 13th, 1832, for the Payment of the Jurors in the Case of his Majesty against the Lord Primate of Ireland, &c.: also an Account of all Wines Imported and Warehoused in the Port of Dublin in each of the seven years, ending April 5th, 1833: also from the 5th of April, 1831, to the latest period to which it can be brought down of all Wines with their denominations, which under the Warehousing Act have been mixed and branded "Mixed Wines" in the Port of Dublin.—On the Motion of Mr. Charles Walker, an Account of all Newspaper Stamps in Ireland, from the 1st of January, 1832, to the 1st of April, 1833.—On the Motion of Mr. Spring Rice, an Account of the Number of Persons convicted of Smuggling under the Act 6th George 4th, cap. 108, sec. 80, and the Penalties inflicted as Punishments: also a Statement of the several Situations in the Public Service in which each of the Persons now receiving Pensions for Diplomatic Services have been Employed, as also the length of their Services respectively.

Bill. Read a second time:—Quakers Affirmation.

Petitions presented. By Mr. Strutt, from the Dyers and Bleachers of Derby, for a Repeal of the Duty on Soap.—By Sir R. Frankland, Lord Henniker, Mr. Hall Dare, Mr. Hope Johnstone, Mr. Briscoe, and Mr. M'Leod, from a Number of Places,—for the Better Observance of the Sabbath.—By Mr. H. Grattan, from Abbey Cromhir, against Tithes and Church Rates.—By Mr. Christmas, from the Ladies of Waterford; and by Mr. Marjoribanks, from Hythe,—against Slavery.

Coldbath-fields Meeting.] Mr. *Roebuck* wished to ask a question of the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, whom he saw in his place, relative to a transaction that had occurred within the last few days. It appeared that a Proclamation, or a paper in the nature of a Proclamation, had issued from the Secretary of State's office respecting a meeting then about to take place in Coldbath-fields. This Proclamation, if so it might be called, had no official, or indeed any, signature whatever affixed to it to indicate its authority; but such a document had been stuck upon the walls in different parts of the metropolis. It was supposed by many that it could not have proceeded from any official quarter, and that the meeting consequently was not illegal. As a judicial inquiry was going on, he (Mr. Roebuck) did not mean to enter further into the subject at present; but what he desired to know was, whether the hon. Gentleman opposite would have any objection to lay upon the Table of the House the information which he had received respecting this meeting, and which had induced the Proclamation to be issued?

Mr. *Lamb* begged to suggest to the hon. Member, whether he ought to put a question on the subject at present. It would not only be extremely inconvenient to answer such a question under existing circumstances, but doing so might tend materially to frustrate the ends of justice. When the judicial inquiries now in progress had concluded the hon. Member might put any question he pleased, and his Majesty's Government would be ready to answer it. At the same time he must say, that there could be no doubt that the Proclamation was perfectly proper.

Mr. *Roebuck* said, that, he would be one of the last men in that House to take any step likely to frustrate the ends of justice in this or in any other case; and if such would be the effect of having his question answered, he was perfectly willing to postpone it until after the Coroner's Jury had come to a decision, provided it was understood that then his present request would be complied with. [*The hon. Gentleman paused, but no answer was given.*] On no other condition could he acquiesce in postponing his inquiry, for in his opinion questions respecting such transactions could not be put too soon. As the Under Secretary refused to accede to his proposition, he should go on, but he would of course studiously avoid anything that could at all bear upon the case of murder, regarding which an investigation was then in progress before the Coroner. His object was to ascertain what the conduct of the Government had been in the affair, and not to touch upon any other topic connected with it.

The *Solicitor General* rose to order. It was, he believed, unparliamentary to bring forward a subject for discussion in that House which was undergoing judicial inquiry elsewhere.

The *Speaker* decided that the hon. member for Bath was not disorderly. He had a right to ask the question he had put to the hon. the Under Secretary, but it would be for the House to deal with that question as they pleased.

Mr. *Roebuck* again repeated that he would forego his question if such an understanding was come to, or if it was the opinion of the House that his pressing it would be likely to frustrate the ends of justice.

Mr. *Lamb* declined giving any pledge of the kind required by the hon. Member.

Mr. *Roebuck* continued. He merely wished to know whether the Government had done its duty, on what information it had acted, and if the Proclamation to which he had alluded had really issued from the Home Office, and received the sanction of the Chief Secretary of State for that department. He was perfectly ready to admit that a more contemptible meeting never had taken place. And had it not been for the interference of the police, there would have been no occasion for fright, nor the slightest ground for alarm or apprehension. The meeting would have gone off without any mischief having been done, if the police had not been sent to the ground, and he was therefore bound to declare, that their presence on the occasion was a most unjustifiable trifling with the rights of the people. It was well known that the people during the last three years had been not only indulged in public meetings on every possible subject, but allowed with impunity to use the most violent language. The Government had, he distinctly asserted, fostered this spirit in the people to promote their own views; and now they resorted to measures of severity to put down that which they themselves had created. They had, in the present instance, sent a body of ruffians to put down a public meeting and break the heads of the people. He willingly admitted that he was out of order, that he had used an epithet which ought not to have escaped him. He would therefore retract the word ruffian, and say that a parcel of foolish people had been sent upon this most unnecessary and disastrous mission. The means that had been adopted to suppress it had raised the meeting into an importance it did not deserve. Had it been allowed to go on three or four indiscreet persons would have talked nonsense and used violent language for a short time, and the matter would have ended without disturbance, broken heads, and loss of life. He would not, however, offer any comments upon the melancholy result of this unfortunate transaction, as with what had taken place he had nothing to do, his sole and only object being to ascertain what the conduct of the Government had been. He was prepared in the first place to contend that the meeting was not distinctly illegal, nor was there any thing in the notice calling the meeting together which would enable any man to decide that it was to assemble for an illegal object. Neither had the Government any means of knowing that the purpose for which they met was in contravention of law; for how could they know what was meant by a National Convention? For his own part he could not understand what it meant. He knew very well what it meant in France and in America, for in those places it was an extraordinary legislative assembly called together according to law. It appeared that there had been a misunderstanding relative to the right of the persons who convened this meeting to petition Parliament for a National Convention; and the Proclamation ought to have explained that such an object was illegal; but, if it was not so, it was clear that no Proclamation the Home Office could issue could change its nature, and make that an offence which really was lawful. He asserted that no proper means had been used or care taken to show that the meeting was illegal, or to warn the people from attending it. The only precaution which had been adopted was to send the police to the scene of action to rush upon the people and knock them down; and he therefore conceived, if they were sent there by the Government, his Majesty's Ministers ought to be held responsible for the indiscretion of the police. It seemed to him that the Government had rather created than prevented the disturbance, and he wished to ask under what information the Government acted, and whether the Proclamation alluded to had been issued by the sanction of the Chief Secretary of State for the Home Department?

Mr. *Lamb* protested against the premature discussion sought to be provoked by the hon. Member, and declared he would not be tempted to enter into it then; but he was, he must say, astonished to hear the hon. Member launch out such extraordinary opinions, if not for the purpose of influencing the Coroner's Jury, at least, in some degree, prejudging the question. The hon. Member required to know whether the Proclamation had emanated from the Home Office, and under the sanction of the Chief Secretary of State, and he (Mr. Lamb) had not the slightest hesitation in replying that it had. With regard to the taunt which the hon. Member had levelled against the Government of their having fostered and winked at turbulent and illegal meetings, he (Mr. Lamb) denied the allegation, and in proof of his assertion need only refer to the Proclamation which about two years ago was issued by the Government for the suppression of a similar meeting advertised to take place at White Conduit House. On that occasion a notice similar to that which had been given in the present instance of the illegality of the meeting was published and circulated, and the result was, that the people, being better advised than they had been with respect to the meeting alluded to by the hon. Member, did not assemble.

Mr. *O'Connell* observed, there could be no doubt the notice for holding the meeting was foolish in the extreme; but, at the same time, he knew of no law in this country prohibiting meetings for establishing a National Convention. In 1792, the Roman Catholics of Ireland held meetings for this purpose, and, what was more, a deputation from that Convention presented an Address to the King upon the Throne, so that at that period at least such a Convention was not illegal. Now, however, such a thing would be illegal in Ireland, because a prohibitory statute had been passed upon the subject; and he threw out this explanation in order that the statement of the Under Secretary might not in its turn affect the investigation that was in progress. But if the meeting in question really was, as had been stated by the Under Secretary, illegal, a Magistrate ought to have been present, and to have accompanied the police to the spot to read the Riot Act, in case the people refused to disperse. The people were not obliged by law to disperse until the Riot Act had been read; but he was prepared to admit, if, previous to that, the police had been attacked by the populace—that if force had been used on the one side—force was perfectly justifiable on the other; for the maxim of the law was, that force might be repelled by force, and in such a case every constable had a right to act upon the defensive. This he conceived to be the law in this country, although it was different with respect to Ireland; for by a particular Act, if a meeting of the Irish people refused to separate within five minutes after they were ordered to disperse by a Magistrate, the persons then and there assembled would be guilty of an offence punishable at law. For the present, while a judicial inquiry was pending, they should cautiously abstain from all observations that might bear upon the subject of that investigation, for no man ought to attempt even to anticipate its result; but if a murder had been committed, if life had been sacrificed, those by whom the measures taken on the occasion had been advised lay under a deep and serious responsibility.

The *Solicitor General* said, that considering the investigation now proceeding might lead to a trial of a grave and highly penal nature—namely, the trial for life or death of one of his Majesty's subjects at the Old Bailey—he thought the hon. member for Bath would have done much better if he had abstained from the observations in which he had indulged. He (the Solicitor General) also wished the hon. and learned member for Dublin had refrained from the remarks which he had made. The legality of the meeting would be inquired into by the competent authorities, and that being the case, he (the Solicitor General) had nothing more to say at present but to enter his protest against the doctrine laid down by the hon. and learned member for Dublin, that an illegal meeting could not be dispersed without reading the Riot Act. The contrary was the law.

Crown Lands — Baron Joy.] Mr. *Harvey* said, that the object of his Motion for a Select Committee to inquire into the land revenues of the Crown under the Commissioners of Woods and Forests having been answered, by the appointment of a Committee on the subject, by the noble Lord (Althorp) he did not mean to press his Motion, provided it was understood that the present Committee was to have power to enter into the whole question connected with the management and disposal of the Crown lands.

Lord *Duncannon* replied, that the Committee would have full power to investigate the whole subject.

Mr. *O'Connell* took that opportunity of asking the noble Lord whether it was true that, in an action tried some time ago between the Crown and the Primate of Ireland relative to those lands, the Lord Chief Baron had ordered the Solicitor of the Crown to pay five guineas to each of the Jury for their attendance; and whether, in fact, a sum of 378*l.* had been so paid; for, if so, nothing could have been more unprecedented or unauthorised? Should the inquiry be answered in the affirmative it was his intention, if nobody else did so, to bring the subject before Parliament, for as well might the Chief Baron have ordered the payment of a million of money as this sum.

Lord *Duncannon* in reply said, that the case had been removed from the Assizes of the county of Cavan to be tried in the city of Dublin, by consent of both parties. The trial took place in November last, and then a verdict was given against the Crown and for the Primate. The Government had perhaps no right to say any thing about the result of the trial, but they certainly had a right to complain of the manner in which it had been conducted, and the language used by the Court upon the occasion with respect to the conduct of the Crown. The Court endeavoured to convince the Jury that the proceeding was vexatious, and instituted to deprive the Primate of land that had been in his family for a long period. The case had undoubtedly occasioned much surprise; but, instead of the suit having been instituted by the present Government, its commencement had taken place during the former Administration; and it was not a little curious that it was Mr. Attorney General Joy who had advised it, although Mr. Chief Baron Joy had met it with such sweeping censure. He was aware, however, that a man might as counsel hold one opinion, and when made a Judge entertain another. It would, indeed, be unfair to bind a Judge to an opinion which he had given as counsel. The case of the payment of the money was under these circumstances:—When the Jury had been charged they retired, but the foreman returned into court, and said they would not give a verdict unless they knew who was to pay them. After some conversation the Solicitor for the Crown said, if the Judge thought the Crown ought to pay the costs, he would at once do so, and, the Chief Baron having assented, the 378*l.* were accordingly paid.

Mr. *Shaw* was not surprised when the hon. and learned member for Dublin attacked the Judges, but he must complain of the imputations which the noble Lord had cast upon one of the most exemplary men on the Bench in Ireland. He thought such conduct was not becoming in a member of the Government; nor was the noble Lord justified in stating that Mr. Attorney General Joy had done one thing, and Mr. Chief Baron Joy another. The noble Lord was not justified in giving any opinion on the subject; but, whether the learned individual alluded to were right or wrong, he, although professing to be ignorant of the merits of the case, was satisfied that a more honourable or upright Judge than Mr. Baron Joy did not occupy the judicial Bench in any country. Was the conduct pursued by the noble Lord such as to encourage public men to do their duty? If, instead of being supported, the Judges were to be aspersed in this manner by the Government, was it likely that impartial and honourable men would undertake an office so responsible.

Mr. *Lefroy* would be unworthy of a seat in that House if he did not rise in vindication of the learned individual who had been so improperly attacked by the noble Lord, and to assure every hon. Member who heard him that there was no foundation whatever for the imputations which had been cast on his learned friend. If there had been anything wrong in the conduct of the learned Judge an appeal was open to the party aggrieved; but, instead, of moving for a new trial on the ground of misdirection, or on any other ground which could be assigned in public court, what had the noble Lord done? Why he had come down behind the learned Judge's back, and brought a charge against him, well knowing that he could not answer it. If there were a Judge on the Irish Bench more learned, impartial, upright, and honest than another, it was the distinguished individual who had been that night so wantonly assailed.

Lord *Duncannon* said, he had made no complaint against the learned Judge, but had merely referred to his opinion as Attorney General, with a view of showing that the trial in question was not instituted by the present Government, but by their predecessors.

Mr. *Harvey* was astonished at hearing the language used by the hon. and learned member for the University of Dublin. He had always supposed that the Judges ought to be free from any control on the part of Government, and was, therefore, utterly astonished at hearing it said, that certain conduct on the part of Government, was but a slight encouragement to Judges to act correctly. If it were true that a Judge had compromised with a Jury, by giving them their expenses before they had returned their verdict, then he must say such a verdict was a corrupt one, and ought to be set aside.

Mr. *Shaw*, in explanation, said that he considered every Judge as a Ministerial officer, and so far acting with the Government. He wished to know from the noble Lord opposite, whether he had ascertained the correctness of the expression attributed to the learned Judge?

Lord *Duncannon* said, he had taken his information from the notes of a short hand writer who had been employed at the trial.

Mr. Harvey withdrew his Motion.

MR. COBBETT'S CHARGE AGAINST SIR ROBERT PEEL.] Mr. *Cobbett* spoke to the following effect*—Mr. Speaker, in rising to make the Motion of which I have given notice, I will trouble the House with neither apologies nor professions: I make the Motion because I have a right to do it, and because I choose to exercise that right; and, with regard to my motives, I leave them to be gathered from the tenor and the tendency of the Resolution which I am about to propose. It appears to me, that the best and most convenient way of proceeding will be, first, to read the Resolution throughout; because hon. Members will thereby be put in full possession, not only of what I am about to propose to the House to adopt, but of the grounds of the proposition which I have to make; and, when in possession of these, they will be the better able to judge of the soundness or unsoundness of those arguments which it will be my duty to produce in support of the Resolution itself. The hon. Member accordingly read the following Resolution:—

Resolved: That, according to the laws and customs of this kingdom, the King, our Sovereign Lord, can do no wrong to the whole, to any part, or to any one of his subjects; that, however, effectually to guard against wrong being in his Majesty's name, and under his authority done to his subjects with impunity, the same laws and customs, which have, as our birthright, descended to us from our just and wise forefathers, make all and every one, acting in that name and under that authority, fully and really responsible to the good people of this kingdom, for every wrong done unto them by any and every person invested with such authority, and that in virtue of such responsibility, the wrong-doing party is subject to such censures, pains, and penalties, as in virtue of the said laws and customs, the several tribunals of the kingdom have in all ages been wont to inflict; that, if this responsibility were not real and practical, we should be living under not only a despotism, but an avowed despotism, for the King being incapable of wrong-doing, and his servants being responsible merely in name and form, and not in practice, they also could do no wrong, and then the people of this renowned kingdom, the cradle of true liberty, would be the most wretched slaves ever yet heard of under the sun; that, in cases where the wrong-doing is committed by inferior functionaries, or is, in its effects, confined to individuals, or to small numbers of sufferers, the ordinary courts of justice have usually been deemed competent to afford redress to the injured; but that, when the wrong is the act of a Minister of State, sworn to advise the King for the good of his people, when that Minister of State receives as a reward for his fidelity and skill large sums of the people's money, and when the wrong by him done is, in its effects, so deeply and so generally mischievous, as to send ruin and misery to sweep over the kingdom like the pestilence, then there is, for the purpose of yielding justice to the suffering millions, no power competent but that which is possessed by their faithful Representatives assembled in this House.

That, in the year 1819, there had long been and then was, in virtue of divers Acts of Parliament theretofore passed, a paper-money in circulation throughout this kingdom, which paper-money was, in effect, a legal tender in payment of all private debts, as well as in the payment of taxes; that this paper-money, descending so low as to notes of one pound, had been the almost only circulating money of the country, from the month of February, 1797, that is to say, for the space of twenty-one years; that this paper-money soon became depreciated to so great an extent, that the prices of commodities had, during the said twenty-one years, risen on an average of years and of commodities, to about double the amount of the prices at which the same commodities were usually sold before the issue of the said legal-tender paper-money; that the depreciation of the money was so notorious and so amply avowed in Parliament, that divers Acts were passed, during the said twenty-one years, to raise the allowances to the royal family, the salaries of the Judges of the police Magistrates, of the army, of the navy, and of almost every one in public employ, for the purpose of counteracting the effect of this very great depreciation; that, during the said twenty-one years next preceding 1819, all mortgages, rent-charges, leases, settlements, annuities, bonds, and other contracts for time, together with all wills and testaments, had been agreed on, settled, and made, on the basis of this depreciated money; and that, during the said twenty-one years, about 500,000,000*l*. of the public debt had been contracted in the said depreciated paper-money; that, therefore, to pass an Act compelling the debtor parties to make good these contracts for time, to the very letter, in sterling gold, must be, in fact, an act of confiscation against, and a sentence of ruin pronounced upon these parties; while, with regard to the people at large, such Act must, in reality, nearly double the amount of the public debt, nearly double the amount of all the above-mentioned augmented salaries and public pay, and, of course, nearly double the real amount of the taxes.

That, notwithstanding these premises and conclusions, so indubitably true, and so clear to the understanding of every man of common sense, the right hon. Robert Peel, then one of his Majesty's most honourable Privy Council, did, in the said year 1819, bring into the then House of Commons, and procure to be passed by that House, a Bill to put an end to the legal-tender paper-money, which Bill, unaccompanied as it was with any measure for the revision and rectifying of private contracts, and for the adjustment of public engagements, was a Bill inevitably tending to produce that injustice, that confiscation, and that ruin, hereinbefore described.

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* Reprinted from the corrected Report published by Mr. Cobbett.

That this Act, which received the royal assent on the 2nd July, 1819, though it provided for what was called the gradual resumption of gold-payments, began at once to plunge the whole community into pecuniary confusion; that the prices of all commodities, and of all property, moveable, or immoveable, began instantly to fall prodigiously in price; that mortgaged estates were, in thousands upon thousands of instances, taken from the owners and sold, in many cases, for less than the amount of the mortgages; that, in other cases, fixed charges upon estates swallowed up the whole of the rental; while, with regard to leases, bonds, annuities, and other contracts for time, and, above all things, with regard to property dropping in to be disposed of by will, the demon of injustice seemed to have been, by this destructive Act, let loose upon the kingdom, setting landlords and tenants, creditors and debtors, brothers and sisters, parents and children, to tear each other to pieces, bringing down hundreds of thousands of families from a state of competence and ease, and many from a state of opulence, to a state of utter ruin and beggary, while all those who were living on the taxes, and who were in fact receiving double pay, were rolling in wealth, and lording it over the rest of the community; and that, of all these dreadful effects of such a measure, the said right hon. Robert Peel had been duly warned even before he brought in the said fatal Bill.

That, by the said Act, gold payments were to be completely resumed, and the one-pound notes were to be wholly abolished, in the month of May, 1823; but, that so terrible were the effects of the aforesaid Act, such were the ruin and misery that it had produced, that, on the 22nd July, 1822, another Bill was, by the then advisers of his Majesty (of whom the said right hon. Robert Peel was one), brought into the then House of Commons, and was afterwards passed into a law, postponing the abolition of the one-pound notes for eleven years longer; that an important part of the Act of 1819 was thus repealed; that an acknowledgment was thus virtually made by an Act of the House itself, that it had, principally by the said right hon. Robert Peel, been induced to act unwisely, and to do great wrong to the people by the said Act of 1819.

That, if the Act of 1822 had been wise, if it had put a stop to the wrong done and still doing by the Act of 1819, it came very tardily, it waited till prodigious ruin had been effected; but, that this Act of 1822, while it postponed the abolition of the one-pound notes for eleven years, left the gold payment part of the Act of 1819 in full force: so that, while the issuers of paper-money were thus invited and encouraged to inundate the country with one-pound notes, they and the holders of their notes were left exposed to constant, and, first, or last, certain ruin; that this ruin (of which the said right hon. Robert Peel and his colleagues were duly warned) was not slow in making its appearance; that, towards the close of the year 1825, the bubble, thus created by the law itself, began to burst, and that, before the end of January, 1826, 100 banks had stopped, not having gold wherewith to pay their notes, the whole kingdom being thereby plunged into alarm and confusion, thousands upon thousands of families (descending to the very artizans and labourers) being brought down to beggary; and, such being the state into which the country had been brought, that the Ministers themselves declared, in Parliament, that at one time, the country had actually been within forty-eight hours of barter, that is to say, destitute of all measure of value, and in a state of utter confusion and anarchy.

That, with all this sad experience of the effects of his measures, the said right hon. Robert Peel (still one of his Majesty's most honourable Privy Council, and then become one of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State) gave his sanction to a Bill (which became an Act on the 22nd March, 1826) for again abolishing the one-pound notes at the end of three years, notwithstanding the postponement of such abolition, provided for in the Act of 1822; that, by this Act of 1826, the nation was again plunged back into the low prices, and, in effect, double taxes, produced by the unjust Act of 1819; that the ruin and misery of all the industrious classes, and the wealth and luxury of those who live on the taxes, have gone on increasing from that day to this; and that, at this moment, there appears to be no human being able to discover any quiet way of extricating the kingdom from its present state of unparalleled difficulty and danger.

That, contemplating these mighty calamities, thus heaped on his Majesty's industrious and dutiful people, and further contemplating the probable danger therefrom to be apprehended to the safety of his Majesty's authority and Throne, and clearly tracing a great part of these to the want of knowledge in the right hon. Sir Robert Peel, this House, reserving to itself the right of adopting further and other proceedings in the premises, deems itself bound, in duty to his Majesty and from an anxious regard to the well-being of his people, not to leave them again exposed to calamities and dangers proceeding from the same source; and that, therefore, this House will present a loyal and dutiful address to his Majesty, praying that his Majesty will be graciously pleased to dismiss the right hon. Sir Robert Peel from his Majesty's most honourable Privy Council.

The *Speaker* said, before the House proceeded to consider the question, it would be as well to ascertain from the hon. member for Oldham, whether what he had read was a part of his speech, or a Motion [Mr. *Cobbett:* A Motion]. If the paper which the hon. Member had read was a part of his speech, it was proper to state, that it was unusual in that House to read a speech; if it were a Motion, then perhaps the hon. Member would address the House, in order to show how it could be regularly received.

Mr. *Cobbett* said, the paper which he had read was entitled a Resolution. It began, "Resolved," and went on as a Resolution to the end.

The *Speaker* said, if it was a Resolution, or a string of Resolutions, he had only to inform the hon. Member, that it was customary to place on the Journals of the House Resolutions or Motions; but it would be extremely inconvenient to place on these Journals elaborate arguments or pamphlets.

Mr. *Cobbett* admitted, that the Resolutions were long; but he was at the same time sure, that he had seen Resolutions equally long which had been moved in that House, and placed on the Journals. The House, however, might dispose of the question as it thought fit; but he would proceed, in the mean time, to show, that the Resolutions were founded in justice and reason. The hon. Member proceeded as follows:—Much has been said about Ministerial responsibility; but, for my part, I have never seen anything like real responsibility demanded of any Minister. Responsibility does not mean being laughed at, or scolded, by the Members of this House. It means liability to punishment of some sort; and the least of those punishments is that of being publicly censured or reproved by some public authority. In common life it means liability to suffer in person or in purse; and not, to use the word ignorance as applicable to the right hon. Baronet, men are made to suffer, and justly made to suffer, for injuries arising from their want of knowledge in matters which they undertake to perform. If, for instance, a person profess to be a surgeon, and you experience injury from his want of knowledge of his profession, you have your action of damages against him; though it may clearly appear that his intention was good. It is not of bad intention that I accuse the hon. Baronet, for I know nothing about his intentions; but, bad intention is not necessary to be proved in the case of the surgeon: it is only necessary to show, that he has done injury from want of knowledge in his profession. Just so ought it to be in the present case: the censure of this House ought to be inflicted, not only on account of the wrong that has been done; but also, in order to prevent like wrong being done in future from a similar cause. I am sorry that the First Lord of the Admiralty is not now in his place; because I counted on his zealous and able support upon this occasion. That right hon. Gentleman, in his place in Parliament, in 1829, frankly confessed, that he had been led astray in the case of the Bill of 1819, by the doctrines of Mr. Ricardo; that he repented him of what he had done in supporting that Bill; and that that Bill was making us pay in gold a debt contracted in a depreciated paper. The hon. member for Knaresborough told us, the other night, that Mr. Ricardo had lived to repent of his error. I hope, that this repentance was deep and sincere; for, as a political sin, his was the greatest ever committed by mortal man. An hon. Baronet (the member for Kent) made grievous complaints the other night about the distress of the landed interest; but that hon. Baronet supported the measure which had caused that distress, not seeing that it would convey the lands from the then proprietors to the hands of the Jews and usurers. I now proceed to show how the Bill has worked in ruining landlords and farmers, and in the starving of labourers. First, I shall state how it reduced the price of wheat. The price of wheat for the twenty-one years preceding 1819, was 11*s.* 8*d.* a bushel; in 1818, 9*s.* 7½*d.*; in 1819, 8*s.* 7½*d.*; in 1820, 7*s.* 6½*d.*; in 1821, 6*s.* 7*d.*; in 1822, 5*s.* 1½*d.* But wheat is the thing that falls slowest; it is so absolutely an immediate necessary of life, that the owner is able to keep up its price longer than any other article of farm produce. The price of cattle of all sorts fell much more in proportion than wheat did in price. But, let us take the article of English wool, of which the following has been the progress downwards in price. The price of South Down Wool; from

1797 to 1819, was 2*s.* 11½*d.* per lb.; from 1819 to 1826, 11*d.*; from 1826 to 1833, 9*d.* What, then, must the effects of this Bill have been upon the farmer, the landlord, and the labourer? In many parts of the country the amount of the wool used to be sufficient to pay the rent of the farm. How are farmers to pay their rent now, and without that rent, how are the landlords to pay the interest of the mortgage on their estates? The consequences have been such, that the land has passed away from its owners in innumerable cases; and, though I verily believe there are many landlords in the House who have lost more than the half of their estates by this Bill, yet I also believe, though they know that every word of this Resolution is true, not one of them will vote for it. Not only has agriculture suffered by these proceedings; manufactures have suffered the same fate. Let us take iron for instance. The price of iron (British pig), from 1797 to 1819, was 8*l.* per ton; from 1819 to 1826, 5*l.*; from 1826 to 1833, 2*l.* 15*s.* The iron-master had the same rent to pay; if he had mortgages, the same amount of interest; and every one must see, that such a process must bring him down to ruin; and this is what ought to have been foreseen by the right hon. Baronet. Nor were the effects confined to the King's European dominions. I was surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman (the Secretary for the Colonies) assert, the other night, that the pecuniary distress of the West-Indians had arisen from their having produced too much sugar of late years; that it was over-production, and not the agitation of the slave question. If the right hon. Gentleman were to go to Preston, he would find, that the greater part of those naughty pretty girls, whom he and I so well remember, are now, for the greater part, become wives; and he would find them, in too many cases, obliged to drink their tea without sugar: let him go and tell them, that the West-Indians bring too much sugar to England, and that that is the cause of their ruin. I was in hopes, that this strange notion was buried in the grave with the late Lord Liverpool, who, at the very moment when hundreds and thousands of the Irish were starving; at that very moment, when we were called upon to subscribe to send them oatmeal and potatoes, declared, in the most positive manner, that the distress arose from the over-production of food in both countries. Before the right hon. Gentleman again ascribes distress to over-production, I beseech him to attend to the progress of prices in coffee and sugar, from the time of passing the fatal Bill of 1819; which prices are as follows:—Coffee from 1797 to 1819, 147*s.* per cwt.; from 1819 to 1826, 90*s.*; from 1826 to 1833, 53*s.*—Sugar, from 1797 to 1819, 82*s.*; from 1819 to 1826, 26*s.*; from 1826 to 1833, 22*s.* There have been failures of late to the amount of 10,000,000*l.* in India. People wonder what is come over the East Indies: thousands upon thousands of East Indian families are in a state of the deepest distress. Indigo and saltpetre are the two great articles of produce in the East Indies. The progess of the prices of these downwards, in consequence of the Bill of 1819, will account for the ruin and bankruptcies in that country. The price of Indigo, from 1797 to 1819 was 7*s.* 3*d.* per lb.; from 1819 to 1826 5*s.* 11*d.*; from 1826 to 1833 4*s.* 11*d.*; present price, 4*s.* 3½*d.*; and none of low quality now is produced, as there was ten years ago. Saltpetre, from 1797 to 1819, was 65*s.* per cwt.; from 1819 to 1826 23*s.*; from 1826 to 1833, 28*s.* Such are amongst the consequences of this first-mentioned Bill; and for these consequences the right hon. Baronet is answerable. Others were to blame as much or more than he; Mr. Huskisson, Mr. Tierney, and Mr. Ricardo; but it was the right hon. Baronet who brought in the Bill, and what is more, he is now here himself. Had he been nothing more than a mere Member of Parliament, that would have been another thing; but he was the author of the Bill by which this great and mighty mischief was done. He was, too, a Privy Councillor at the time. What mere Members of Parliament said upon the subject amounted to nothing. The hon. member for Hertfordshire, for instance, said, upon the introduction of the Bill, that, "if ever there was a moment of his (Mr. Peel's) life, in which he was most unquestionably and most eminently entitled to the gratitude of his country, it was the present one." One of three courses must be taken by the right hon. Baronet: he must contend, that it was right to do all this enormous mischief; that it was right to bring down to ruin so many hundreds of thousands of families; or that he is not answerable for it seeing that it was done by the Parliament; or that no such consequences were produced by the

Bill. The first two he will surely reject; and as to the latter, I shall be very curious to hear what facts and what arguments he has to bring forward to produce conviction in the mind of this House. Want of foresight would be the best defence; and then he would have to account for his conduct in rejecting the warnings repeatedly given him by the hon. member for Whitehaven and the hon. member for Birmingham, also by the present right hon. Secretary-at-War, and by the Bank Directors themselves. The best way of proceeding, however, would be to imitate the right hon. Baronet, the First Lord of the Admiralty, confess his error, as he himself had most laudably done in the case of Catholic Emancipation, and other cases, especially that striking case, the voting for the resolution of Mr. Vansittart in 1811, declaring a one-pound note and a shilling to be equal in value to a guinea in gold. Having so laudably and so successfully recanted upon these occasions, why not do the same now; and instead of being angry at this Motion being made, call upon the House to adopt it, and vote for it himself? This would be the best way; and to something very much like this, he must come, at last, whatever may be the decision of to-night. But it is not the Bill of 1819 alone of which this Resolution speaks. There is the Bill of 1822 to be answered for. In 1822 the Government, of which the right hon. Baronet was a member, introduced a Bill for the purpose of lowering the value of money, and raising the price of commodities. Every one knows what had followed from the passing of that Bill. The noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Lord Althorp), stated the other night, when opposing the Motion of the hon. member for Whitehaven (Mr. Attwood), that he should not deem himself an honest man if he voted for that Motion. Now I ask the noble Lord in what the measure ascribed to the hon. member for Whitehaven differed from that which passed in 1822? The two measures were precisely the same in principle. But there was something flagitious in the conduct of the Government in 1822 with respect to the country bankers. They were then invited to London; they were urged to put out their one-pound notes; they were given to understand that they were to be allowed to issue those notes for eleven years; but when the proceedings then adopted had placed the country in a more dangerous state—when Ministers were compelled to come down to that House and confess that they had brought the country to within forty-eight hours of a state of barter—the pledge given to the country bankers was broken, and Parliament passed the Act of 1826; which I have always declared, and still declare, was the most unjust measure ever adopted by any assembly in the world, except the acts passed against those who petitioned that House for Parliamentary Reform. The compact, the solemn compact, entered into with the country bankers was, that they should issue their one-pound notes for eleven years; but in 1826 the right hon. Baronet came down to that House and advised it to put an end to the issue of country one-pound notes. The measure of 1826 brought down 100 country bankers to actual bankruptcy, and it half ruined at least 500 more. After this they may talk as they will of the faith of Parliament and national faith. Why was not faith kept, I ask, with the country bankers? But this was not the worst breach of faith. The great breach of faith was the return to low prices under the continuance of high taxes. I believe, that the right hon. Baronet was ignorant of the effects which his measure would produce; but, as the plea of ignorance would not save a mischief-doing surgeon, why is it to save a mischief-doing Minister? In the Resolution, however, I have not made use of the word ignorance; but of the phrase, "want of knowledge," and that is, of course, confined to knowledge applicable to the great matters in question. As to other matters, I pretend not that he is destitute of a want of knowledge. In all other sciences he may, for aught I know, excel all the rest of mankind. In one science, that of prosody, for instance, it appears that he greatly excels; for, I understand, that, the other night, after I had left the House, he told the House, that I ought to have pronounced the word rescind with *i* short, instead of *i* long. I most willingly acknowledge the right hon. Baronet's superior knowledge in this science; but it is not with regard to the measure of sounds of letters that I accuse the right hon. Baronet with want of knowledge; it is of the measure of value, of which I accuse him of that want; and of that want, there is not a man who hears me, who is not convinced in his heart that he ought to be accused. [At this moment Sir James Graham took his seat on the Treasury Bench]. I am glad to perceive that the First Lord of the Admiralty has returned; for now I am sure that I shall have one vote, at any rate. The right hon. Baronet, in a very elaborate performance, had insisted upon the justice of taking thirty per cent from the interest of the fundholders; and he justified the proposition upon the ground, that the Bill of 1819 had given to the fundholders thirty per cent more than they ought to receive. He had voted for the Bill of 1819, misled by the high authority, of Oracle Ricardo; he had made the *amende honorable;* but to make it complete, he must vote for this Resolution. There is another person, too, who must not be forgotten upon this occasion; namely, the present First Lord of the Treasury, who had declared in his place in Parliament, twenty times over, that all the great difficulties of the country arose from the Bill of 1819 having compelled the people to pay in sterling gold a debt contracted in depreciated paper. Well, the noble Lord has now the power to cause justice to be done; and why does he not cause justice to be done? It has been said by the right hon. Baronet himself, that there had been great distress as to the changes in the value of money before 1819; and who has ever denied it? The Secretary for the Colonies has said, with an air of triumph, against the poor West Indians, that their distress was stated to exist so far back as 1804. The right hon. Secretary was then a very little boy; if he had been a man then, he would have known that that distress arose from a cause precisely similar to that which is now in operation. The peace of Amiens had been made; and the Bank of England had, agreeably to the then law, been preparing for a return to cash payments. There was always a state of uncertainty, during peace, as to the time when the Bank would be called upon to pay in gold; and, of course, there were frequent fluctuations in the value of money; but this was all well known in 1819; the right hon. Baronet had had the experience of all this; and, therefore, these were so many beacons for him to shun, instead of examples for him to follow. In 1810 and 1811, in the midst of war and of loans, it was proposed by Mr. Huskisson and a Committee of that House, that the Bank should be compelled to pay in gold at the end of two years. Out of Bedlam such a proposition never was made before; yet, even the authors of that proposition, have, in this House, been extolled to the skies. The next defence is, as I gather from the debate on the proposition of the hon. member for Whitehaven, that it was necessary to do something in 1819; that it was necessary no longer to suffer the currency of the country to be in its then degraded and uncertain state. Whoever denied that? Not I at any rate. Every man that I conversed with at the time wished for a return to the ancient standard of value. But does it follow that it was necessary that it should be done in that unjust and wicked or foolish manner in which it was done? If there be a mortification in a man's foot which, if left alone, will certainly kill him in time, does it follow that it is right to cut off his head, in order to put a stop to the effects of mortification? And, did no one point out the proper and just thing to do? Was there nothing pointed out but the lowering of the standard or a depreciated paper-money? Had the right hon. Baronet no choice, except that which lay between the little shilling and the worthless rags? Oh yes! there was something else pointed out to him; and that, too, by parties to whom he ought to have listened with the greatest attention. In the year 1817 about a million and a-half of Englishmen and Scotchmen petitioned the then House of Commons for a Parliamentary Reform. But those Reformers were not such fools as to want a Reform that was to bring them no good. They petitioned to be relieved from their burthens; for a lowering of salaries and public pay in proportion to the then rise in the value of money; they petitioned for a reduction of the interest of the debt, proportioned to the recent rise in the value of money; they petitioned against being compelled to pay in sterling gold a debt which had been contracted in depreciated paper: they complained, as the First Lord of the Admiralty and the present Prime Minister have complained, of being compelled to pay, in a high currency, debts contracted in a low currency. In justice to those men; in justice to those Reformers, chiefly belonging to the working classes, I must beg the House to suffer me to read a small part of one of their petitions, sent from Hampshire on the 10th of February, 1817:—'With regard to salaries paid out of the public money, your 'petitioners beg leave humbly to observe, 'that they have only to refer your honourable House, to your own Journals, 'and to the Statute Book, for the space of 'the last twenty years, in order to afford 'your honourable House ample conviction 'of the fact that the salaries of the Judges 'have been doubled, that the salaries of 'the Police Justices have been greatly 'augmented, and that a like augmentation 'has taken place in almost all other salaries, 'and in the pay and allowances of an 'enormous military staff establishment, and 'that all these augmentations have been 'adopted upon the express ground of the 'augmentation which had taken place in 'the price of wages, in the price of all 'articles of dress, in the rents of houses 'and land, and in the prices of all the 'necessaries of life; and, therefore, now 'that it is notorious that these latter have 'all been diminished in the degree of nearly 'one-half, your petitioners will not insult 'your honourable House by appearing to 'suppose that you will refuse their humble 'request, that the above-said salaries and pay 'may be immediately reduced in the same 'degree. And, as to the interest on the 'annuities constituting the funded debt, 'your petitioners, agreeing in opinion with 'a noble Earl of the other House of Par-'liament, that the currency of the coun-'try has been changed, that the taxes, 'which were imposed in a currency of low 'value, are now collected in a currency of 'high value, beg leave to observe also, that 'the far greater part of the debt, which 'was contracted in a low currency, is now 'paid an interest for, by the people, in a 'higher currency. Therefore your peti-'tioners most humbly pray, that the rate of 'interest on the funded debt may be im-'mediately reduced, in such a degree that 'the fruit of the whole productive labour 'of the country may no longer be swal-'lowed up by the dealers in funds, or, to 'adopt the words of a petition, received by 'the House of Commons from the town of 'Leicester, at the time of the South-Sea 'bubble, your petitioners most humbly im-'plore your honourable House, "that the 'last drop of the nation's blood may not be 'poured out to be licked up by the cannibals 'of Change Alley."' And, Sir, what was the answer that these sensible and industrious men received? There came petitions from 1,500,000 of them; and one single answer was given to them all; and that answer was, an Act of Parliament, passed by the then House of Commons, and the then House of Lords, to put them into dungeons at the pleasure of two Secretaries of State; into any dungeons in the kingdom, without their being informed of what they were put into dungeons for; and for keeping them in those dungeons as long as the Ministers should please. Ah! Sir, that is not forgotten by those men and by their children; and happy would this House be if it could be carried back to 1817, in order that it might follow the advice of those men, instead of inflicting unjust punishment upon them! The Parliament that inflicted that punishment, is, I thank God, never to return; and it is for the present Parliament, which is, really and truly the work of their efforts, to do justice to those of them who are now alive, and to the memory of those of them who are dead. But, Sir, it is not of the past only; it is also of the present and of the future, that we have to speak, when we are talking of the effects of the want of knowledge in the right hon. Baronet. The Resolution which I have the honour to submit to the House, alleges, that, "at this moment, there appears to be no human being able to discover any quiet way of extricating the kingdom from its present state of difficulty and danger." And is there any human being able to discover such a way? Vain is the imagination of him who supposes that the evil consequences of these measures have attained their height, and can go no further. The evils are daily increasing both in number and magnitude. Look at our state, in a pecuniary point of view only: look at our constant uncertainty: look at our constant peril: a bank with a driblet of gold amounting to a million or two, with twenty millions of paper afloat: Scotland and Ireland with 1*l.* notes still, and with scarcely a bit of gold ever to be seen in either: fourteen millions of money, borrowed by the Government through the means of what are called Savings' Banks; the most sensitive the easiest alarmed, and the quickest in seeking safety, and all liable to be drawn out and demanded in gold in one single day. In short, it must be evident to every man living, that a run for gold may at any time plunge the whole country into confusion; and that there are many causes, any one of which might happen any day to produce such a run. Every thing, then, hangs by a mere thread; every thing worthy of the name of property has thus been placed in jeopardy by that series of measures which began in 1819. If, indeed, the sufferings which the nation has had to endure during these thirteen years had purchased for it security against further pecuniary convulsions; even then it would have been purchasing future security at a very dear rate; but this is not the case; it has only purchased us greater insecurity than ever: it has been thirteen years of suffering to purchase insecurity and peril, which are never to end until some convulsion come to put an end to our fears by realising that which we fear. This state of things has been produced by the Bill of 1819, and its consequent measures; and if there be no responsibility on those who inflict sufferings and dangers like these on a people, then let the word responsibility be effaced from our language; or, at any rate, never let it be again pronounced in this House. Before I conclude, I must notice the effects of the Bill of 1819 upon the condition of the working people throughout the kingdom. Had the evils of this bill flown over their heads, left them unharmed, I should have given myself very little trouble about its other consequences, and should certainly not have troubled the House with the Resolution now before it; but, having witnessed the ruin and misery brought upon them, and having once heard the right hon. Baronet assert that his Bill had mended their lot by making provisions cheaper, I cannot refrain from describing the consequences of this Bill to them; so mischievous have those consequences been, that, in my estimation, they surpass, and far surpass, all its other evil consequences put together. When the right hon. Baronet was speaking upon this subject, he forgot that lowering of wages could take place as well as lowering of prices; and I will now show him, by a document as authentic as any that can exist in the world, that his Bill, while it was producing all the other evils which I have attempted to describe, was absolutely working the destruction, either of the bodies, or the morals, of the labourers in agriculture. The document to which I refer, is, "a new regulation of allowance to the poor," dated from the Grand Jury Chamber, Winchester, August 31st, 1822; and issued by the authority of Sir Thomas Baring, two other Lay Magistrates, and five other Magistrates being highly beneficed clergymen. It is signed by Mr. Woodham, of Winchester, their clerk. From this document, which I put upon record at the time, and which will now reach every part of this kingdom, it appears, that these Magistrates, 'recommended the officers of every parish to offer 'three shillings a-week from Michaelmas to 'Lady-Day to every unmarried man, and 'four shillings a-week from Lady Day to 'Michaelmas, so that he may be engaged 'to work the whole year; and any unmarried man refusing that offer shall not 'be entitled to any relief.'

This "new regulation" was adopted in consequence of the Act of 1819; and, those regulations continued up to the fall of 1830, when they produced their natural effects; and, though acts of violence and revenge are in a very few cases ever to be defended; and though I, by no means, defend those acts to which I now allude, let me ask the Members of this House to look at those regulations; to look at the hale young man condemned to labour throughout the whole year for 3*s.* 6*d.* a-week, without food, without drink, without lodging, without anything but the bare 3*s.* 6*d.* A hundred and thirty-five labourers (most of them amongst the best of the county) transported, and most of them for life, leaving behind them seventy-nine wives, and upwards of 200 fatherless children: these, in Hampshire alone, we are to look at as amongst the consequences of the right hon. Baronet's Bill of 1819. I call not upon the House to ascribe any portion of this shocking result to the right hon. Baronet's intention; for it is impossible that he ever could have dreamed that such dreadful consequences could have proceeded from that Bill: what I ascribe to him is a want of that sort of knowledge which he ought to have possessed before he attempted to bring forward that measure. If, in sitting down, Sir, I cannot boast of the forbearance of the House towards me, I have no wish to complain of the contrary. I have simply done my duty, in bringing before the House a subject of greater importance than any that can be named. I have done it in a manner conformable with the practice of Parliament; and I now leave it to the House to dispose of the Resolution in any manner that it pleases.

Mr. *John Fielden*, in rising to second the Motion of his hon. colleague, begged to claim the indulgence of the House while he stated to them his reasons for doing so. He was actuated by no feelings of personal hostility to the right hon. Baronet, who was the subject of the Motion, but felt compelled from a sense of duty to adopt the course he had done. Whatever were the opinions of this House on the Bill of 1819, and the measures subsequently connected with it, the prevailing opinion out of doors was, that it had produced misery and suffering such as were never before inflicted on any people so industrious and productive as were the people of England. His hon. colleague had stated that the taxes had been doubled since the Bill was adopted, and he (Mr. Fielden) hoped the House would have patience with him while he showed them that the scale of taxes imposed on him, and the class of manufacturers to whom he belonged, had been trebled since the year 1815—the close of the war; he had a right to complain of this. A responsibility for having done this injustice rested somewhere; and, believing, as he did, that it had been caused by a contraction of the currency, and what was called a return to cash payments, without any measure being adopted to reduce the taxes to the alteration made in the value of money by the Bill of the right hon. Baronet; he complained of the operations of that Bill; and as the right hon. Gentleman had in this Session set up a justification of his Bill, and said he would not shrink from the responsibility it involved, and as the right hon. Gentleman was still opposed to that adjustment which should have accompanied it in 1819, he had a right to complain of him. He had heard that the right hon. Baronet's father had warned him of the consequences of that Bill, and had stated to him, that if it were passed, it would double the value of his funded property, but somebody would lose it; whether the right hon. Baronet had had such a warning or not, he could not say, but such, he would endeavour to show to the House, had been its effects. He would suppose a case, that a parent, at the close of the war in 1815, had two sons, A and B, to whom he bequeathed the sum of 1,000*l.* each, to be vested in the hands of trustees until they came of age, with a direction that A's 1,000*l.* should be invested in the three per cent consols, which at 57*l.* 10*s.*, the price of that day, would purchase 1,740*l.* and that B's 1,000*l.* should be invested in land. The present price of three per cents, was 87*l.* 10*s.* and this would give for A 1,522*l.* 10*s.* The 1,000*l.* of B's, invested in land, was not now worth more than 750*l.*, so that the principal belonging to A was more than double the principal belonging to B. The interest the trustees of A received, from the time of the investment to the present period, amounted to 939*l.* 12*s.*, while the interest upon B's investment would not be more than 540*l.* so that the trustee of A now was in possession of 2,462*l.* 2*s.*, while the trustee of B had only 1,290*l.* Now, neither of these children nor these trustees had done any act to produce these results; but A was now possessed of double the property of B. Were changes like this, arising from the alteration in the value of money, to be overlooked? Was it just? Was it reasonable? He would then proceed to show what had been the effects of the alteration in the value of money as measured in the manufactures which he (Mr. Fielden) produced; and the intrinsic value of which is the same now as in 1815, notwithstanding such alteration. He should here have the support of the hon. member for Essex, who, on a former night declared, that money, which was the mere measure of commodities, did not alter their value. To illustrate what he had to show to the House, he would claim their indulgence, while he read to them a table, showing the prices of cotton, and of articles manufactured from it from 1815 to the end of 1832. The table contained twelve columns, and he would first read what those columns contain: [Here the hon. Member read the following table.]

(See over leaf.)

Year	1 lbs.	2 *d.*	3 *s. d.*	4 *s. d.*	5 *s. d.*	6 *s. d.*	7	8 pcs.	9 pcs.	10 pieces.	11 pcs.	12 pcs.
1815	4 3/10	19½	7 0	18 0	11 0	8 11½	18½	66⅔	3⅓	3⅓	0	0
1816	4 3/10	18½	6 7½	16 0	9 4½				3⅓	3⅔	0⅓	0⅓
1817	4 3/10	20	7 2	15 3	8 1				3⅓	4	0⅔	0⅓
1818	4 3/10	20	7 2	16 0	8 10				3⅓	3⅔	0⅓	0⅓
1819	4 3/10	13½	4 10	13 0	9 2				3½	4⅔	1⅓	0⅔
1820	4 3/10	12	4 3	11 6	7 3				3⅓	5⅓	2	1
1821	4 3/10	9 7/16	3 4½	10 6	7 1½	6 2	44		3⅓	5⅔	2⅓	1⅓
1822	4 3/10	8⅛	2 11	10 0	7 1				3⅓	6	2⅔	1⅓
1823	4 3/10	8 3/16	2 11	9 6	6 7				3⅓	6⅓	3	1⅓
1824	4 3/10	8 7/16	3 0	9 0	6 0				3⅓	6⅔	3⅓	1⅓
1825	4 3/10	12¼	4 4½	9 9	5 4½				3⅓	6	2⅔	0⅔
1826	4 3/10	6¾	2 5	7 2	4 9				3⅓	8⅓	5	1⅓
1827	4 3/10	6¼	2 3	6 5	4 2	3 9¼	65½		3⅓	9⅓	6	1⅓
1828	4 3/10	6⅛	2 2½	6 3	4 0½				3⅓	9⅔	6⅓	1
1829	4 3/10	5⅝	2 0	5 7	3 7				3⅓	10⅔	7⅓	0⅔
1830	4 3/10	6⅝	2 4½	6 3	3 10½				3⅓	9⅔	6⅓	0⅓
1831	4 3/10	5⅝	2 0	5 9	3 9				3⅓	10⅓	7	0⅓
1832	4 3/10	6⅜	2 3½	5 6	3 2½				3⅓	10⅔	7⅓	
								66⅔	60	124	64	13⅔
					Interest 18 years 3⅓......			60				
								126		13⅔	Interest on excess.	
										137⅔ 126	11⅔ balance due to Manufacturers, Jan. 1, 1833.*	

Here he had shown that the class of manufacturers to which he belonged had, at the end of 1832, not only paid both interest and principle, if the account between them and the national creditor had been kept in those manufactures: but that they had overpaid the account by eleven pieces and two-thirds of a piece. The Government had had from the cotton manufacturers what this table shows for this account, and, if it be not settled, proof is here given of the wrong done by Government to the manufacturers by raising the standard of value. It was perfectly right to recur to a metallic standard, but wrong to do so without accompanying it with an equitable adjustment between the public and the fundholder, and between all debtors and creditors who would be seriously injured by such a change. But how do the manufacturers now stand with regard to the national creditors? They are told that they now owe not sixty-six pieces and two-thirds for every 60*l.*, as they did in 1815, but that they now owe 218 pieces for every 60*l.* Notwithstanding this he declared that, if they be fairly dealt with, they should be considered as having paid off the whole of the debt. Here is crying injustice, and for which somebody ought to be responsible. He would ask, was it right or equitable that his class should be

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REFERENCES TO THE TABLE.

* No. 1. Shows the number of pounds weight of cotton required to make a piece of third 74*s.* calico.
2. The average price of cotton per pound.
3. The average cost of cotton for one piece.
4. The average price of such calico in the Manchester market.
5. The average sum the manufacturer had for labour, expenses and profits, in every year from 1815 to 1832 inclusive.
6. The average sum for labour, expenses, and profit, for three periods of six years each.
7. The sum less per cent for labour, expenses, and profit, in each of the six years than in the year 1815, the close of the war.
8. The number of pieces of said calicoes which 60*l.* would purchase the fundholder in 1815.
9. The number of pieces the fundholder was entitled to receive annually, at the rate of 5 pieces per cent.
10. The number of pieces the manufacturer has had to pay annually.
11. The excess of pieces over and above 5 per cent. he has had to pay in the respective years.
12. The simple interest on such excess from the year in which the manufacturer had to pay it to the end of the year 1832.

thus dealt with? The manufactures that he had been speaking of were wove upon hand-looms, and during this period the hand-loom weaver had had his wages reduced from 4*s.* 6*d.* to 1*s.* 3*d.*, and looking further back the result would be worse still. He had limited his retrospective view to the year 1815, because that was the year when the war ceased and the borrowing ended, and from which period no addition to the burthens of the people in consequence of the debt should have been made. It was the duty of statesmen at that period (and the right hon. Baronet was one), so to have regulated the currency as to have prevented any increase of taxation as measured in things. He would now read to the House what had been the effect upon those engaged in manufacturing upon power-looms, and with the most improved machinery during the same period; and similar results would be manifest. [Here the hon. Member read the three following tables.]

72s. Calico made by Power-Loom.

Year.	lbs. of Cotton for one piece.	Price of Cotton per lb.	Cost of Cotton for one piece.		Value of one piece.		Sum for Labour, Expenses, and Profit.		Less per Cent. than in 1815.
		d.	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	
1815	5⅓	19½	8	8	27	0	18	4	
1824	5⅓	8½	3	9	13	6	9	9	46¾
1831	5⅓	5⅝	2	6	8	3	5	9	68½
1832	5⅓	6⅜	2	10	8	3	5	5	70½

Half-Ell Velveteens, 20 lbs. Weight.

Year.	lbs. of Cotton for one piece.	Price of Cotton per lb.	Cost of Cotton for one piece.		Value of one piece.		Sum for Labour, Expenses, and Profit.		Less per Cent. than in 1815.
		d.	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	
1815	21⅓	19½	34	8	100	0	65	4	
1824	21⅓	8½	15	7	51	8	36	1	44¾
1831	21⅓	5⅝	10	0	33	4	23	4	64¼
1832	21⅓	6⅜	11	4	30	0	18	8	71½

30 Hanks Water Twist.

Year.	Cotton required for 1 lb. Twist.	Price of Cotton per lb.	Cost of Cotton for 1 lb of Tw.		Value of 1 lb. of Twist.		Sum for Labour, Expenses, and Profit.		Less per Cent than in 1815.
		d.	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s*	*d.*	
1815	1⅐	19½	1	10¼	3	3	1	4¾	
1824	1⅐	8½	0	9¾	1	8	0	10¼	38¾
1831	1⅐	5⅝	0	6½	1	0	0	5½	67
1832	1⅐	6⅜	0	7¼	1	0½	0	5¼	68½

He was sorry to see such impatience manifested by the House. He was aware how unsatisfactory it was to them to hear details of this sort, and in terms they might not clearly understand, but which it was necessary for him to use. He knew the House had not been accustomed to have its time taken up in this way, but he thought a better knowledge of manufactures, and of the state of those engaged in them, was necessary in this House, for it should be borne in mind, that the manufacturers had to pay taxes out of the money they received for their labour; and in the proportion the money value of their labour was reduced, their means of paying taxes and of consuming taxed commodities were also reduced. The tables he had read, show a corresponding decline in four most important branches of cotton manufacture, and might be relied on as being a true criterion of what had been the state of the whole of that great business for the last eighteen years, and whether the weaving part had been done by hand-looms or by power-looms. Now, it would appear that great injustice had been done to manufacturers in the cotton trade, and we were not yet arrived at a safe currency. We had still a paper money, consisting of five-pound notes, ten-pound notes and upwards, and what assurance had he, if the right hon. Baronet be continued one of his Majesty's Privy Council, that a further appreciation of money might not be resorted to? He therefore, thought, on this ground, he was justified in supporting the Motion of his hon. colleague. It might be said, that these manufactures could be made cheaper—that cotton was cheaper. The right hon. Baronet asked, the other night, how it was, that cotton had fallen in price. He would tell the right hon. Baronet what perhaps might be worth knowing, that a standard of value had been observed, which his bill, bad as it was, had not the power to change, and that cotton was not cheaper. The manufacturers, purchased their cotton from the Americans, and they now gave them as many pieces of goods (or pounds of twist) for the same number of pounds of cotton as they did in 1815, notwithstanding the price of cotton here had varied from $19\frac{1}{2}$*d.* to $5\frac{5}{8}$*d.* per pound, as measured in the money of this country. For the cotton that would make seventy pieces they gave $24\frac{1}{3}$ pieces in 1815; for the same in 1824 they gave $22\frac{1}{4}$; in 1831, $22\frac{3}{4}$; and in 1832, 26; and the average of the eighteen years had been $23\frac{2}{3}$ pieces, for the cotton that was required to produce seventy pieces of third 74*s.* calico. But it was said, the necessaries of life were lower, that we had had improvements in machinery, and that we could produce goods cheaper. As to the necessaries of life, we had now to give the labour required to make two pieces of calico, for the same quantity of wheat which the labour required to make one piece would purchase, comparing the average price of wheat at 88*s.* the quarter, which it was in the seven years 1812 and 1818, inclusive, with its present price of 53*s.* per quarter. And admitting there might have been some improvements in machinery which, by-the-by, had been much overstated, he asked what right had the fundholder to share with the manufacturers in the fruits of their ingenuity, and increased labour? He had none. If the debt had been fairly contracted, which it was not, he had no right to any greater quantity of other men's productions, than he could purchase at the time with the money he lent. But he denied the right of Parliament to impose this debt upon the people, and saddle posterity with the payment of it. But, even if they had the right, Parliament was not justified in attempting to cause it to be paid in money of a higher denomination of value than that in which it was borrowed. The war could not have been carried on without a depreciation in the standard of value, for they could not have raised the supplies within the year, and therefore, it was unjust to resort to an appreciation of the standard of value without accompanying it with a corresponding reduction of taxation. It was said we were in an average state of prosperity. He did not know how hon. Gentlemen made their comparisons. He had shown that we every year went on getting less and less for labour, expenses, and profits, for the manufactures we produced. It had also been boasted that the hands employed in mills were well off. The hon. member for Buckinghamshire (he believed) said the other night that the hands employed in the cotton-mills near Manchester, could get, on an average, ten shillings per week. If this was so, let them compare that with the average for the same description of hands in America, who get 14*s.* 11*d.* on an average for the same sort of work. Why was this mighty difference? Besides, the difference was not only in amount of money, for the American hands could purchase double the quantity of provisions that the same money would purchase in England. The number of persons, too, employed in cotton-mills, was small compared with the number of hand-loom weavers, who were in such deep distress; the number in all the cotton-mills in Great Britain would not, he believed, exceed 170,000; and his opinion was, that there were four persons engaged at hand-loom weaving for one person employed in mills.

An *Hon. Member* rose to order, and complained that the hon. Member's speech had reference to a scale of prices unconnected with the Motion.

Mr. *John Fielden* did not know why the hon. Member should have spoken to order, when he (Mr. Fielden) was showing the distress which had arisen from the operation of the right hon. Baronet's Bill. Did the hon. Member think he should support a motion like this, without giving his reasons for doing so? He could see no necessity for this interruption, nor for the repeated cries of "Oh! Oh!" He hoped hon. Members would let him proceed to the end of what he had to offer. He assured them he would not be put down by noise and clamour. He was sent there to represent the labouring and manufacturing classes, who expected their case would be attended to in a Reformed Parliament differently from the manner in which it was now received. He and they had hoped that he was sent to a deliberative assembly to discuss and determine for the people's good; but, when he went back to his constituents and told them that when he recapitulated the fatal effects of the right hon. Baronet's measures, and the instances in which their interests were sacrificed, to their utter ruin, he was only laughed at by hon. Members, could they think that such conduct would give satisfaction? Such conduct was very unbecoming, and ought not to be practised in the House. The best way to cause him to sit down would be to listen to him patiently until he had concluded what he had to say. He had other matter to state to the House as a reason for the vote he should give on this question. In 1829, during a period of severe distress, he and a number of other manufacturers met at Burnley, to represent the distress that prevailed in that district to the right hon. Baronet, then Secretary for the Home Department, and he would read the memorial which was sent up on that occasion to their county Member, Lord Stanley, and the answer of the right hon. Baronet. But before doing so, he would just observe, that this distress was so great in the manufacturing districts, that the boroughreeve of the loyal town of Manchester, for the first time in his (Mr. Fielden's) experience, called a public meeting in that town to petition Parliament or to memorialize the King upon the subject. The memorial he had mentioned, was as follows:—

To the Right Honourable Robert Peel, his Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department.

Sheweth,—That your petitioners, deeply impressed with a sense of the increasing distress of the manufacturing and labouring population within the hundred of Blackburn (which hundred contains, according to the last census, 148,704 individuals), have taken measures for the assembling of a few of the cotton manufacturers of that district, preparatory to which they had caused to be made accurate surveys of the poor in about half-a-dozen townships in which they might expect immediate co-operation in their object, and that such surveys being completed, they had intended to have prosecuted the inquiry upon a more extensive scale. But your petitioners being now assembled at the Bull Inn in Burnley, on the first day of May, 1829, and being furnished with the several returns from townships hereafter alluded to, feel themselves so alarmed with the result, that they are impelled at once to submit it to you without losing the time which must be consumed in obtaining more numerous returns.

That they feel themselves the more justified in this course, because they believe that the few returns already furnished, will exhibit a tolerably correct view of the general state of the trade, and of the population throughout the whole district.

That the result of these returns shows that, in the seven townships of Colne, Foulbridge, Tramden, Marsden, Barrowford, Higham, Goldshard, and Roughler, containing, in the whole, a population of 19,869 individuals, there are 5,137 persons (approaching to one-third of the whole), whose weekly income, arising from labour, varying from 18*d.* to 2*s.*, presents an average weekly income per head of 19*d.*; and there are 1,743 persons (being one-eleventh part of the whole) whose weekly income, from the like source, varying from 2*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.*, presents an average weekly income per head of 2*s.* 3*d.*; thus showing that better than one-half of the whole population do not earn, on an average, more than 15¾*d.* per head per week, from which there are considerable outgoings, leaving a clear income applicable for food, clothing, and rent, and other necessaries, of less than 2*d.* a-head per day. That, notwithstanding this small pittance is the full income of so large a population, it may be safely stated that they are, at least at present, in full employment; but your petitioners are afraid that such full employment cannot long be continued, as even, according to the present state of wages, the manufacturers cannot dispose of their commodities at a remunerating price.

That the property within the above township liable to the poor-rate is so overwhelmed with public charges that it does not at present afford more assistance in the shape of parochial relief than about 12*d.* per head per week in addition to the earnings—thus showing that, even including parochial relief, the weekly income of more than one-half of the population does not exceed, on an average, 17¼*d.* per head per week.

That your petitioners ascribe this miserable state of the poor to the present very low state of wages, which are already under the lowest state which they fell to in the distressed times of 1825-26, whilst the price of provisions in general is considerably higher than at that period.

That your petitioners do not venture to give any opinion on the cause producing this low state of wages, nor to suggest any remedies for the same; but they content themselves with this simple statement of facts, to which they respectfully, but earnestly, entreat your immediate attention.

(Signed) James Grimshaw,
(Chairman of the Meeting.)
William Hargreaves,
John Fielden
Nicholas England,
Thomas Kaye,
Benjamin Hargreaves,
William Bolton,
Lord Massey,
William Corlass,
John Roberts.

In reply to this very reasonable and moderate request, the memorialists received the following answer, in a letter addressed to Lord Stanley, which he would read to the House, and he durst say they would listen to it with more attention than they had heard either the memorialists or himself.

Whitehall, May 13, 1829.

My Lord,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's letter of the 9th instant, and of the memorial which accompanied it, setting forth the extreme distress of the labouring classes in the neighbourhood of Colne and Burnley.

On the first indication of disturbance in the county of Lancaster, I took immediate measures for the reinforcement of the troops in the northern district, with the view of affording to the civil power every assistance in the protection of life and property—and I earnestly hope that through the active measures of the magistracy and the commander of the forces in the district, the public peace will be preserved.

I need scarcely assure your Lordship that his Majesty's Government deeply regret that state of suffering and privation, to which alone any disposition to acts of insubordination and outrage appear to be ascribed.

When the distress is general, as it is described to be in the memorial which you have transmitted to me, it is very difficult to divine any measure by which its immediate relief, or even the mitigation of it, in any material degree, can be effected. But I beg your Lordship to inform the memorialists, that I shall not fail to bring the representation which they have transmitted to me, through your Lordship, under the consideration of his Majesty's Government. I have the honour to be, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient and most humble servant,

Robert Peel.

The House would see that the memorialists gave no opinion as to the cause or remedy for the distress complained of; but contented themselves with simply stating the fact, that a large proportion of the work-people in the hundred of Blackburn had less than 16*d*. a-week for subsistence; and he thought that such distress should have led to an inquiry into the cause of it; but it did not, and the answer was so unsatisfactory that the memorialists, seeing that there was a notice of a motion by Sir R. Vyvyan for the 26th of the same month, for inquiry into the cause of the distress of the country, they sent up a representation to that Gentleman of the distress that they had ascertained and reported to the right hon. Baronet, and they soon after received a reply from Sir R. Vyvyan, that on the day the motion was to come on, there were not forty Members in the House, and consequently the inquiry was then got rid of! The right hon. Baronet refused to inquire into the distress, but soldiers were sent by him into the neighbourhood where it prevailed, who consumed the food which was so much wanted by the labouring people. The right hon. Baronet would not, in 1829, inquire into the distress, and he had, in this Session, refused to give his assent to inquiry into the distress when proposed by the hon. member for Whitehaven, and the hon. member for Birmingham, and these were additional reasons with him (Mr. Fielden) for giving his support to the Motion of his hon. colleague.

Sir *Robert Peel* said, that, influenced by the respect which he entertained for the tribunal before which he was arraigned, he should treat the charge as if it had been preferred against him by some man of great weight and influence, who acting according to his conscientious conviction, and stimulated by an imperative sense of duty, felt it necessary that in his person a public example should be made, and that he should be subject to the highest penalty which could be inflicted on any one admitted to his Majesty's Councils. He would take for granted that the hon. Gentleman conscientiously believed it to be incumbent upon him to call upon the House to inflict the greatest public disgrace which they could inflict, as a warning to future Ministers. It certainly appeared strange to him that the hon. Gentleman should conscientiously entertain that opinion, when, only a few nights ago, he had openly avowed in that House, that when he compared him (Sir Robert Peel) to others who had been concerned in the same measures, he thought him an angel of spotless purity. That the hon. Gentleman should, after such an avowal, think it reconcileable with justice, to select him as the special and single victim for punishment, warranted a suspicion that other objects than those of public justice were contemplated by the hon. Gentleman. Two months had now elapsed since the notice of this Motion was first given, and up to this hour he had never received the slightest intimation of the specific ground on which he was to be put upon his trial. Whether the charge was a corrupt motive, or ignorance, or wilful misconduct, he was left to guess from the vague notice of the hon. Gentleman's Motion. He now understood from his speech of to-night, that the hon. Gentleman was convinced that he (Sir Robert Peel) had not been swayed in the slightest degree by any views to self-interest, or by any motives of a personal nature; but then the hon. Gentleman maintained, that he had been guilty of gross and unpardonable ignorance in the discharge of his public duties, and that, therefore, he ought to be dismissed from his Majesty's Councils by a vote of the House of Commons. Would it not have been fair in the hon. Gentleman, when he was drawing up his long and elaborate bill of indictment, to have communicated to the accused the specific offences for which he was to be put upon his trial, in order that he might have had the ordinary opportunity of meeting the accusation and of preparing for his defence? Was it consistent with justice, with candour, or with ordinary usage, that he should hear that night, for the first time, this tissue of accusations? Accusations of what? Of something that he did in the years 1819, 1822, and 1826. And then the hon. Member who had seconded the Motion had not confined himself to proceedings connected with the currency —but had said, on the contrary, that he would vote for his dismissal on account of an answer which he had returned to a memorial addressed to him from a party of manufacturers who had assembled on the subject of wages at the Bull Inn at Burnley. The hon. Member had read the memorial, and read what the hon. Member had called the answer; but the fact was, that this was not an answer to the memorial, but an answer to a letter that he had received from Lord Stanley upon a different subject, which letter the hon. member for Oldham (Mr. Fielden) had thought fit to suppress. The hon. Member (Mr. Fielden) had said, that he and his friends had met at the Bull Inn, and had addressed to him (Sir Robert Peel) a statement respecting wages, and that they had received from him by way of reply a letter about sending them troops, for which they had never applied. Such had been the statement of the hon. member for Oldham. But suppose that Lord Stanley had addressed to him (Sir Robert Peel) a representation upon the danger to the public peace existing in the county of Lancashire, and suppose that the letter referring to troops was in answer to the representation of the noble Lord, who had been foreman of the Grand Jury, and had made a communication to him officially in his public capacity: suppose the case was thus (as, if reference were made to the documents in the department of the Secretary of State's Office he believed it would prove to be), he asked the House with what justice the hon. Member could read his answer to the House, and at the same time withhold the communication to which that letter was the reply? He asked, with what sense of justice, with what feelings of common decency, the hon. Member could urge this as a sufficient ground to dismiss him from his Majesty's Councils? Suppose he had mis-conducted himself with respect to the men who had met at the Bull Inn, on the subject of wages, why had not the hon. Member the courage to bring a charge against him by a distinct motion, having express reference to that transaction? What connexion had it with the Currency Question, on which he was arraigned by the hon. Member for Oldham? Why had not the hon. Member, who dwelt so much on his twelve columns about the price of muslins and calicoes—why, if the distress of the country, or of any part of the country, was a fair subject for the consideration of Parliament (and he fully admitted, that it was)—why had he not brought it forward in a fair and manly manner?—why had he not, instead of accusing him in this pitiful, sneaking, skulking way, proposed some better remedy for the distress of the people, some surer method of raising the price of his muslins and his calicoes, than the dismissal of one man from the Councils of the King? But both the hon. Gentlemen were as ignorant of facts and of forms as they were ready to assail him. If the hon. Member had communicated to him his Resolutions, he would have so far corrected them, that they should not have abounded with misrepresentations, and false statements of notorious facts. The Resolutions began by stating, 'That, according to the laws 'and customs of this kingdom, the King, 'our Sovereign Lord, can do no wrong to 'the whole, to any part, or to any one, of 'his subjects: that, however, effectually to 'guard against wrong being in his Majesty's 'name, and under his authority, done to 'his subjects with impunity, the same laws 'and customs which have, as our birth-'right, descended to us from our just and 'wise forefathers, make all and every one, 'acting in that name and under that 'authority, fully and really responsible to 'the good people of this kingdom for every 'wrong done unto them by any and every 'person invested with such authority; and 'that, in virtue of such responsibility, 'the wrong-doing party is subject to 'such censures, pains, and penalties, 'as, in virtue of the said laws and cus-'toms, the several tribunals of the king-'dom have, in all ages, been wont to 'inflict: that if this responsibility were 'not real and practical, we should be 'living under not only a despotism, but an 'avowed despotism, for the King, being in-'capable of wrong-doing, and his servants 'being responsible merely in name and form, 'and not in practice, they also can do no 'wrong, and then the people of this re-'nowned kingdom, the cradle of true 'liberty, would be the most wretched 'slaves ever yet heard of under the 'sun; that, in cases where the wrong 'doing is committed by inferior function-'aries, or is, in its effects, confined to 'individuals, or to small numbers of suf-'ferers, the ordinary courts of justice have 'usually been deemed competent to afford 'redress to the injured; but that, when 'the wrong is the act of a Minister 'of State, sworn to advise the King for 'the good of his people, when that Min-'ister of State receives, as a reward for his 'fidelity and skill, large sums of the 'people's money'—The first charge then against him was, that he was a Minister of the Crown sworn to advise the Crown, to the best of his ability, and in the receipt of a large salary for performing that duty, when he contributed to pass the Act of 1819. Unfortunately for this charge, in the year 1819, he was not Minister of the Crown, he was not a sworn adviser of the Crown, nor was he in the receipt of one farthing of the public money. The hon. Gentleman insinuated—by way of aggravation of this charge, that he being in the receipt of large sums of the public money, had increased his official salary, by increasing in 1819 the value of money. Now the truth was, that in 1819, when the value of money was raised, he had no salary, and in 1822, when, according to the hon. Gentleman, the value of money was lowered, he was a Minister, and he had a salary. The fatal Act of 1819, as it was called, was not introduced by him in his capacity of Minister, but a private Member of the House of Commons. The Motion of the hon. Gentleman, therefore, if made at all, ought to be, not for his dismissal from the Privy Council, but for his expulsion from the House of Commons. This Act of 1819 was in no respect the offspring of any advice he gave to the King, for he was not then in office, nor connected with the Government. He had left office in the preceding year, 1818; he had given no advice to his Majesty whatever on the subject; he was asked by the Government whether he had any objection to take the Chair of the Committee of that House, which was then about to be appointed to inquire into the subject of the Currency; he had replied that he had given his vote in favour of Mr. Vansittart's Resolutions in 1811, without a full consideration of the subject, and that he must reserve to himself the right of taking a course perfectly unfettered either by his own former votes, or the opinions of any member of the Government. The result of more mature consideration and of the inquiry before the Committee, was a conviction on his part, that cash payments ought to be resumed, and he had acted upon that conviction. But as he had before observed, he acted on it as an individual Member of Parliament, not as an adviser of the Crown, and therefore the Motion of that night ought to be for his expulsion from the House. The charge against him was, that he had over-persuaded—that he had deluded by a speech, an innocent and unsuspecting House of Commons. But he must first have deluded the Select Committee, on whose Report the Bill and his speech were founded. But who deluded the House of Lords? for that House was also a party to the whole proceeding to which it gave a cordial and unanimous assent. The hon. Gentleman was grossly ignorant of every fact connected with the case. He charged him with having introduced three measures as a Minister of State, when in fact he had introduced only one of them, and that one not in the capacity of a Minister of the Crown. When the other two measures were brought forward, he was a member of the Government, but he was not the introducer of either of them. These three Bills passed through the two Houses of Parliament in the years 1819, 1822, and 1826. The Bill of 1819 was the only one which he had introduced, and that was founded on the Report of the Committee; to that Report no exceptions were taken, and the Bill passed through the House of Commons without a division. The Bill of 1822, the hon. Gentleman said, was a Bill notoriously brought in to repeal the Act of 1819; and he had declared it to be grossly inconsistent to bring in a Bill in the year 1822 to repeal the Act of 1819. There might be a man gifted with faculties of so high an order that no charge of inconsistency could ever be brought against him—a man of such clear apprehension, of such profound penetration, of such consummate judgment, that he never had held opposite opinions on any subject—one whose pen never contradicted his tongue, and was never inconsistent with itself;—such a man might be entitled to address him to the *argumentum ad hominem*—to arraign him for the want of consistency. He would, however, whisper to the hon. Member, that he was not the man; that from no quarter could the charge of inconsistency proceed with so bad a grace. The charge of inconsistency brought against poor short-sighted human beings as to the effects of political measures — this accusation, that politicians had not penetrated into futurity—had not foreseen all the remote consequences of the measures they introduced—that made wise by experience, they had been compelled to recede and repair their errors—argued either consummate wisdom, or consummate assurance in him who preferred it. But, after all, was the Act of 1822 tantamount to a repeal of the Act of 1819. What had Mr. Huskisson said of the bill of 1822? Mr. Huskisson said, "the present plan so far from being suggested because the measure of 1819 was repented of, was at all points perfectly consistent with that measure; and he (Mr. Huskisson) in the Committee upon the Bill of 1819, had actually proposed that the present plan should at that time be recommended to Parliament."* These were questions on which hon. Gentlemen differed then, and differ now; but if the House assented to the motion for dismissing him from his Majesty's Privy Council, would it not actually decide the whole of these questions? He would again say, that he still felt that it was right to try the experiment of the year 1826; but subsequent experience had convinced him that he could not permit the issue of the one and twopound notes without practically banishing the gold, and undermining the basis on which the great superstructure of the currency was built. It was this consideration that had induced the Government to shorten the period for which the small notes had been issued. He was sorry to occupy the time of the House by such statements; but he dared to say that the hon. Gentleman would pronounce that he had entirely shrunk from the question, if he did not enter into the details of the policy of the Acts of both the years 1819, 1822, and 1826. But the proper time for discussing the policy of these Acts was when the question of the currency was before the House the other night, and on that occasion, he had declared, that in the year 1819, it was very difficult to have taken any other course than that which had been adopted. However, the policy of the different Acts had then been discussed; he would not further waste the time of the House by referring to it, as the real question for them to determine now was whether he (Sir Robert Peel), on the ground of interested motives, or on the ground of utter ignorance, or what was far worse, in defiance of the solemn warning which he and all mankind had received from the oracular predictions of the hon. member for Oldham, had pursued a line of policy for which he ought now, by a vote of that House, to be dismissed for ever from his Majesty's Privy Council.—When the three measures were passed, what was the sense entertained of them by the House of Commons? The Bill of 1819 went through that House, as he had said before, without any opposition whatever, and without one single division either on its principle, or on any one of its details. In the year 1822 the Bill underwent very little discussion. There was only one division upon it in its progress through that House. And though now described in terms of such strong condemnation by the hon. Member, it was then opposed only on the second reading. He had certainly not deluded the House on that occasion, for he had taken no part in the discussion, and when the House was divided on the second reading how many gentlemen voted against it? Why, only four.—In the year 1826 the Bill had undergone repeated discussions, and, he believed, several divisions, and at last the House had divided on the third reading. What was the division in that case? Why, the numbers were for the third reading 108, and against it 9. To the whole of the three Bills, therefore, of 1819, 1822, and 1826, the total opposition that could be mustered was 13, out of a House of 658 Members. Was he to be dismissed the Privy Council for measures which the House had ratified by such large majorities? He was then dealing with the Motion on its merits, and supposing it to be brought forward on conscientious grounds. If he had any private account to settle with the hon. Gentleman he would defer that for the present, but he could assure him that he would pay him his obligation in a currency not in the least depreciated, and he would not follow the hon. Gentleman's convenient doctrine with respect to the liability of persons to fulfil their engagements. He would now come to the charge that he had deluded the House. He was obliged to take the charges irregularly and inconsistently, as he had heard them from the hon. Gentleman. He was charged with having committed an act of folly, rendered even criminal by not having duly paid sufficient attention to the solemn warning which the hon. Member had been pleased to give upon the subject. The hon. Gentleman declared that there had been persons who had foreseen the consequences of these measures, and that they had endeavoured to persuade him of those consequences, but that, notwithstanding all their efforts, he had neglected their warnings, and that he was therefore to be held responsible, first for all the iniquity of the Act, and secondly for persevering in the measures after he had been favoured with such advice. The hon. Member did not, indeed, name himself as one of the prophets, but it was impossible not to see that the hon Member's aim was quite as much to extol his own powers of vaticination, as to expose the defect of judgment in others. To go back to 1819, he was then merely a Member of Parliament, and had been invited to belong to a Committee which was to be appointed, in order to consider what ought to be done under the then existing circumstances of the country. There were only three courses to pursue. The first was that which had been proposed by Mr. Western. That hon. Gentleman, then a member of the House of Commons, had proposed that the paper money should be kept at the height at which it then was, in order to ensure the continuance of war prices, and by which it was maintained, that all the consequences which had resulted from his bill might have been avoided. The second course that might have been taken was one which had been suggested by some Gentlemen, and was nothing less than that there should be an actual and permanent depreciation of the standard. Some Gentlemen at that period maintained that there had been a virtual and actual depreciation of the standard value of the coinage during the war, and that the ounce of gold no longer represented the sum of 3*l.* 17*s.* 10½*d.*, but 5*l.*, or even 5*l.* 10*s.*; and they argued that reverting to cash payments ought to have been accompanied by a paper convertible into gold, but gold depreciated in amount. The third plan was that which had been adopted, viz., to revert to the old standard of the country. The hon. Gentleman exclaimed: "Ay, I foretold all the consequences, and I charge with the guilt of all the calamities that ensued all who did not attend to me, and they must be denounced and expelled from the King's Councils; for I prophesied all that would happen—let justice be done—you must be debased, but I exalted!" He wished not only to defend himself, but to destroy the hon. Gentleman's character as a prophet, which it was not his second object on this occasion to establish. He was vain enough to flatter himself, that he should find very little difficulty in showing that his claims to oracular wisdom in this respect were but shallow and presumptive. The hon. Member's bill of indictment charged the whole of the existing difficulties of the country to the Act of 1819. The hon. Member's memory perhaps failed him, but, at all events, his opinions in 1822 were not the same as his opinions now. He would ask any Gentleman in that House, whether he could reconcile this with what he had said in his letter addressed to Mr. Western on that occasion?—These were the hon. Member's words:—'In the first 'place I have to remind you, as I did Mr. 'Wodehouse, that the Act of 1797, and 'those by which it was continued, pro'vided for a return to cash payments at 'the end of six months after the making of 'peace, and these payments are not yet 'come at the end of seven years after mak'ing the peace. So that the Bill of 1819 'was really a relaxation of the Pitt system 'which would have sewed you up in six 'months after the peace was made. It

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* Hansard (new series) vi. p. 206.

'would have taken away your estate seven years ago. And when you are crying out "spoliation," and "confiscation," when you are bawling out so lustily about the robbery committed on you by the fundholders and placemen, and are praising the infernal Pitt system at the same time, you seem to forget that these people always plead, and very justly, the Act of 1797 in support of their present demands. You say, they are receiving, the fund vagabonds in particular, more than they ought. You say, they are paid back more than they lent. You say, that they lent in one sort of money, and are paid in another. This is all very true; but is not this perfectly unfavorable to the Pitt system? And do not the Jewish vagabonds tell you so? Do they not say, or rather their supporters for them, that they lent their money upon the faith of the law, which said they should get their interest in cash at the peace. The measure of 1819 tardily began to prepare for doing what the Act of 1797 commanded to be done long before. What do you mean then by saying that the Act of 1797 cannot excuse the measures of 1819? Common sense would suppose you to mean that the former Act could not excuse the latter for coming so late; could not excuse it for not coming to execute justice upon the hare and pheasant gentry seven years ago, agreeably to "good faith" with the Jews, and the "dead weight." This is the way in which common sense would interpret your words, but you, the great Essex statesman, despise the interpretations of common sense.' Was the distress of the country attributable to the Act of 1819, or was it possible to avoid that Act? Let the hon. Member decide the question: 'The point, he said, we had attained was poor-rates of 8,000,000*l.* a-year, and labourers in rags, and drinking water, and driven out of the farm-houses, and winter subscriptions for the houseless, and men chained to carts drawing gravel—that was "the point we had attained." You will please to bear that in mind. If the devil himself had been the author of the system, he could not have brought us to a much worse point; and yet the great subject of your lamentation is that this system was not persevered in. However, the question is, was it in the power of the Government to uphold that system? You say it was—I say it was not. And this is a great question; because you and many others are wanting to bring the system back. I shall, hereafter, show the folly and injustice of what you call your remedy; but I am here to show, that the Government had not the power (if it meant to preserve itself) to uphold the base paper system. At the time when Peel's Bill was passed, the country was actually upon the eve of open rebellion. It was not six Acts that quieted the people, but low prices. The most populous parts of the kingdom could not be kept from rising in arms, with the price of provisions what they had been during the war. Manufactures must, in a great measure, have ceased, when the markets of the world became open in consequence of peace, if our price of food had not been lowered. If the vile and foolish Corn Bill had not proved a dead letter, the manufactures must have been nearly put an end to as far as related to export. That Bill was intended to do for the landlords what the paper-money had been doing for them; but it, luckily, failed of its object. Have peace at home the Government could not, without reducing the price of the necessaries of life. Besides this, the "rapid advances" in the science of forgery threatened to annihilate the base system by its own means. Nearly one-half of the notes in circulation, in some parts of the kingdom, were forgeries. It was become evident that a stop must be put to the hangings; and yet, without the hangings, what could at all check the forgeries? Then, again, it was as clear as daylight that, in case of war, our enemies would attack us in our own old way with regard to the French assignats. That they could do it was evident, and it was not less evident that the whole thing might at any time be puffed out at a very trifling expense. I was thought to be joking when I said so; but I now repeat, with perfect seriousness, that I not only believe the thing could have been done, but that it would have been done if Peel's Bill had not been passed.' Why, continued the right hon. Baronet, the hon. Member himself did try "to puff the whole thing out," for he recommended as strongly as he could the forging of bank paper. When they considered the great talents of the hon. Gentleman, and that he recommended forgery for the purpose of precipitating the downfall of the system, was it not too much for the same man now to turn round and threaten him with an indictment for having brought in a Bill to guard against the evils which the hon. Member himself had used so much exertion to cause. What he had quoted was published in the year 1822. It was acute reasoning, and he had seen no defence of the Bill of 1819 equal to the defence of it, which the hon. Gentleman had made. The hon. Gentleman had proved, that the Government had not had the power to continue the paper system; that it had run its inevitable course; that bankruptcy must have been declared but for the return to gold; nay, that we were on the eve of civil war on account of the distress and sufferings caused to the industrious poor by the paper system. The House would perceive, that the hon. Member treated Mr. Western as the great advocate for continuing the paper currency at its then value. There was, however, another scheme recommended to Parliament, which was to let the ounce of gold pass for *5l.* instead of *3l.* 17*s.* 10¼*d.* This would have been so far consistent with the principle of the Act of 1819, that paper would have been convertible into gold, but that the standard of value would have been greatly lowered. That proposition also met with no favour from the hon. Gentleman. All the indignation and ridicule which the hon. Member had poured out on Mr. Western fell far short of that which he reserved for those who advocated an alteration of the standard. The great supporter of this plan, the debasing of the standard, was a gentleman from Birmingham, on whom the hon. Gentleman conferred a title, which he believed and hoped was still retained. In all the controversy which he had carried on with him, the hon. Member never called him by any other name than "My Lord Little Shilling." His Lordship had published long pamphlets on the subject, but the hon. Gentleman's contempt for him was such that he would never reason with him, and had always thrust all his arguments aside as the trash of "My Lord Little Shilling." The hon. Member had also addressed a letter to Lord Folkestone, whom he had described as taking wider views on the subject of the currency than any other Member of Parliament. Lord Folkestone, notwithstanding the enlargement of his views, proposed a debasement of the standard. The hon. member for Oldham had referred to the noble Lord in one of his most characteristic papers. He said, 'You have borrowed from me one or 'two sound principles; but the application 'of them is all your own. Your arguments 'are altogether yours, and are of the 'weakest description.' The hon. Gentleman (continued Sir Robert) went on to show, that the difficulty of reverting to the ancient standard was very great, and he had opposed all these plans for reducing the standard in a most able manner. The hon. Gentleman said, that the country must resume payments in gold, and must return to the ancient standard; and what then was the difference between the hon. Gentleman and himself? The difference was this. The hon. Gentleman said, that, on resuming cash payments, we must resume the ancient standard, but must at the same time proceed forcibly to reduce the Debt; and that we must resume the Church Lands [Mr. *Cobbett* said, he had made no such proposal in that House]. Oh, no; there was nothing of that kind in the present Resolutions, but he considered the hon. Gentleman as a public man; and if he adopted any line of argument out of the House different from what he used in the House, he would hold him responsible there for the language the hon. Member used ["No," from Mr. *Cobbett*]. He said yes. There was no public man who had claimed to exercise any influence over the public mind, for which he was not to be held responsible. The hon. Gentleman, then, was an advocate for reverting to the ancient standard; but he proposed with that a forcible reduction of the interest of the National Debt, or rather, a refusal to pay the just amount of interest. He said, that we paid too much to the public creditor. The only other point of difference between him and the hon. Gentleman was, that the hon. Gentleman said, that the country could not afford to pay pensions and large salaries, and they must be reduced. But there was no man in Parliament who would support a proposition similar to that of the hon. Gentleman. He was like the Phœnix of Cowley, "A vast species alone." He certainly had not adopted the hon. Member's views, and never had proposed, and never would propose, any measure which was a breach of public faith. But what did the hon. Gentleman say in answer to Mr. Western? "When you are crying out for confiscation and spoliation, by bawling out about robbery committed by the public creditor, you forget that these men always appealed to the Act of 1797, and very justly." Thus the hon. Gentleman's own opinion was, that the public creditor relied "very justly" on the Act of 1819, for repayment of his debt in gold. With what pretence then could the hon. Gentleman propose to reduce that debt? He would next refer to what the hon. Gentleman had said about the condition of the labouring classes. The hon. Gentleman had read a Resolution of certain Magistrates of Hampshire, which he said was a consequence of the Act of 1819. But the hon. Gentleman ought to have contrasted the situation of the labouring classes when that Resolution was passed, with their situation in 1819. "In 1819," said the hon. member for Oldham (and Sir Robert again quoted *The Register* to the following effect), "the Poor-rates were eight millions—the labourers were in rags—they were chained to carts—they had been banished from the farm-houses—they had no places but the worst hovels to dwell in—and if the devil himself had invented a system, he could not have invented one of greater suffering than that of which he was lamenting the consequence." He had followed the hon. Gentleman with the closest attention, and it was clear, that the only point of difference between him and the hon. Gentleman was not as to the propriety of resuming the ancient standard, but as to the policy and justice of other concomitant measures. The hon. Member required that the national establishments should be forthwith reduced; and because he (Sir Robert Peel) had not made that reduction, and because he had not made the proposition to reduce the interest of the Debt, which no hon. Member had made, or had the courage or the dishonesty to make; because he had not made the proposition, the hon. Member now moved an Address to the Crown to remove him from the Privy Council. He would not make any such proposition, and he would rather be dismissed from ten Privy Councils, if that were possible, than make such a proposition. He was to be dismissed, too, because he had not made such a proposition, when, according to the hon. Gentleman himself, the public creditor relied on the Act of 1797, and relied upon it "very justly." There was not, then, a shadow of difference between him and the hon. Member; they both agreed that the ancient standard should be resumed, and that the public creditor was entitled to expect justice, and not to be fleeced. The hon. Gentleman said, that sinecures should be reduced. If there were any sinecures, let them be reduced; but let no man cherish the notion, that any relief which could be obtained by the reduction of sinecures would be of the least avail. It would be like a drop in the Pacific Ocean. There were in fact no sinecures to abolish. He was ready to reduce establishments, not to the nominal state of any former period, but to that state which was compatible with the present security of the public, and the honour of the country. So much for the Motion of the hon. Gentleman—the public, plausible, parliamentary, grounds of the Motion! The other hon. member for Oldham had referred to the answer he had returned to the representations made of great distress in 1829, and to his taking no means to remove that distress. But at that very time he had sent persons to Burnley, Blackburn, and to other districts of Lancashire, to make inquiries into the distress, and he had given them authority where the distress was most severe, to relieve it; but they were instructed to say nothing of that authority, and indeed to be careful not to allow it to be known that they were agents of Government. If that had been publicly proclaimed, the whole object of the inquiry would have been defeated, and personal exertions on the part of those who were on the spot, would have been greatly relaxed. It was often necessary for the Government to conceal its intentions of relieving distress, otherwise its objects would be defeated. He denied that the expressions of the letter of 1829 betrayed any indifference to the distress of the people. He had promised to bring those complaints under the consideration of the Government, and he had done so, but he could not disclose or reason upon the plans of relief. Suppose part of the plan of relief to be a reduction of taxation, how could he prematurely mention that? He would not enter into details to refute the hon. Gentleman, who thought, because distress existed, and because relief was not instantly promised, and the mode of relief explained, that therefore public men were to be dismissed from the Councils of the King. But what was the real object of the Motion of the hon. Member? The hon. Member well knew that he had not laid any parliamentary grounds for his Motion. The hon. Member said he anticipated a large majority. The hon. Member expected no such thing. The hon. Gentleman knew, that a motion so eminently absurd had no chance of success. The best answer to his motion was that incredulous burst of laughter with which his first announcement of it was greeted, and which would have penetrated any integuments less tough than the skin of the hon. Member. The hon. Member knew perfectly well, that it was hopeless to expect that the House of Commons would inflict any censure on one man for the faults of a whole Parliament, when, in the course of repeated discussions during seven years, only fifteen persons could be found in the Parliament to dispute or doubt the proposition on which the Bill of 1819 was founded. He knew that the House was opposed to the Motion of the hon. Member, but he would state, without any delicacy, what he believed to be the real motive—the unavowed object contemplated by the hon. Gentleman, in a motion which connected his (Sir Robert Peel's) name with all the calamities of the country, and all the distresses of the labouring classes. If he had taken another course, he was not mad enough to believe that he could have escaped the indignation of the hon. Gentleman. Suppose he had agreed with his hon. and much venerated relative, from whom he had, on that occasion, the misfortune to differ—suppose he had agreed that the continuation of the issue of paper money was safe—suppose he had not avowed the opinions he entertained, could he have escaped the hon. Gentleman's censure and vituperation? In one of the hon. Gentleman's books—the volume for 1819,—he found a letter addressed "To Sir Robert Peel, Baronet and Cotton-weaver." "Cotton Weaver!" There was nothing in the whole range of scurrility more disgraceful—nothing which was so offensive in the organs and instruments of party—as that scurrility which sought to depreciate a man because he had raised himself from obscurity by his own talents and exertions. The hon. Member addressed his letter "to Sir Robert Peel, Baronet and Cotton-weaver." When the hon. Gentleman wanted to get into Parliament, he did not disdain the assistance of a cotton-weaver. There were no men who were more distinguished for a vulgar deference to mere rank, than those who assailed it with scurrility, and affected to be superior to all prejudices—to be the chosen champions of liberty and equality. It was to them the most grievous offence that any man should emerge from that class amongst which they were destined to remain. They taunted him with the obscurity of his birth, as if they were themselves the descendants of the Courtenays and Montmorencies: but no; if they were, they would be too generous to despise those who had opened for themselves the avenues to fame and eminence. The illustrious blood which flowed in the veins of the really noble made them too generous to begrudge others the reward of their own exertions, and the public honours which industry and integrity could command. To make it a matter of reproach to any man that he was of humble origin, denoted nothing but inherent vulgarity of mind. And in this age, and with the principles of Government now prevalent, to taunt a man that he had raised himself to a station of eminence by his own exertions and his own talents, reflected discredit on the author, and not on the object of the calumny. So far from that taunt causing him any shame, he felt only proud. He professed the greatest respect for those who could boast of hereditary honours, but he professed equal respect for those new families, which had been raised to distinction by the virtue and talents of their founder. He had had the misfortune to differ from his father on the question of the currency, but the hon. Gentleman would not have spared him had he adopted the opinions of one whom he was bound to respect. And he would here remind the seconder of the Motion who put the hypothetical case of two brothers—A and B—A being a fundholder, and B a landholder; and contrasted the sufferings of B with the prosperity of A—B having suffered a depreciation of his property of twenty-five per cent. He would remind the hon. Gentleman that he himself, the object of his attack, was brother B. The question was, whether, if he had agreed with his lamented parent, would he have escaped this Motion; and though he might have escaped the public plausible motion, would he have escaped that which was the real, though unavowed object of the Motion? The hon. Member concluded the long letter to Sir Robert Peel, in which he attempted in every possible way to degrade him for having supported the Bill system, thus: The right hon. Baronet then proceeded to read the letter: "Now, Sir Robert Peel, I care little whether you reflect on these truths or not. *I know well what is coming* (those words being in Italics), and if I put your name at the head of this letter, it is not to reason with you, *but to point you out*" (also in Italics). What was the meaning of these Italics? Could the hon. Gentleman say, they had any good object? What could he mean by putting in Italics, "I know well what is coming?" and that his object in addressing Sir Robert Peel was, not to reason with him, but to point him out. He knew well what the object was, and no motives of false delicacy should prevent him from doing what he believed to be a public good, and to declare that, in his opinion, the hon. Gentleman had speculated then, and was speculating now, on the chances of public confusion. The intention of the present Motion was "*to point him out*." He did not make this charge on light grounds; he did not rest merely on the letter of 1819. He would refer to a later period, when they would find the hon. Member addressing the labouring classes, the physical strength of the country, and maintaining similar doctrines to those to which he had just alluded. On the 6th of April 1833, the hon. Gentleman recommended the formation, in different parts of the country, of what he called defence associations, the objects of which were to obtain, in reference to the direct taxes, an accurate list of the names and places of residence of all the great landowners in each county; to ascertain, as nearly as possible, when each of them came to his estate, and whether he got it by purchase, heirship, or bequest; and also to ascertain the probable worth of it. That a man talking as the hon. Member was in the habit of talking, of his attachment to liberty, should recommend the intolerable tyranny of this commission, to inquire into the nature and amount of property with a view to ulterior measures, was disgusting in the highest degree. The association was 'to cause to be printed, 'at a very cheap rate, a true pedigree of 'every great landowner showing how 'much of the public money he or any 'of his relations have received, not omitting his predecessors for three or four generations; showing how he came by his 'estate, and particularly showing whether 'the men, women, or children appertaining to him, are, or have been, on the 'pension or sinecure list, and to cause a 'sufficient number of these papers to be 'circulated amongst the industrious classes 'in his own immediate neighbourhood, so 'that we may all know one another well." 'This,' continued the hon. Member, 'is 'the sort of commission that is wanted, 'and I would call it the reckoning commission, for it is absolutely necessary that 'we begin to make up our accounts and to 'have them ready. It would be a sad 'thing for us to be taken by surprise. 'When we all know one another well, we 'shall easily arrange matters quietly, we 'shall easily come to an equitable adjustment.' Now, where was the fairness—where was the courage in thus inciting the thoughtless and the ignorant to acts which would involve them in certain punishment—of adopting a course and throwing out recommendations, the effect of which was to drive men to desperation? The hon. Member could have no object but one connected with the accomplishment of that end which now led him, looking to public confusion, or "equitable adjustment," to bring forward the present Motion in order to point him (Sir Robert Peel) out in reference to this "reckoning commission," as in 1819 he had pointed out his father, "knowing well what was coming." It was on public grounds that the hon. Member assailed him. The hon. Member had not the same motives for attacking him which he had had for attacking others. He had never lent the hon. Member his confidence; from him the hon. Member had never received any obligation. His object doubtless was to strike terror by the threat of his denunciations, to discourage opposition from the fear of being signalized as a victim. But he told the gentlemen of England, that their best security was in boldly facing and defying these insidious efforts. God forbid that the hon Member's speculations on the prospect of "public confusion" should be realized. He laboured under no apprehension that they would. He felt confident, whatever might be the political differences that divided public men, that all who were interested in the upholding of law and property, would unite in their defence and put down such attempts. Not only would it be the greatest calamity, but a calamity embittered by the greatest disgrace, to live under such an ignoble tyranny as this.

Come the eleventh plague, rather than this should be;
Come sink us rather in the sea;
Come rather pestilence, and reap us down;
Come God's sword, rather than our own.
Let rather Roman come again,
Or Saxon, Norman, or the Dane.
In all the bonds we ever bore,
We grieved, we sighed, we wept; we never blushed before.

"But blush indeed we shall, if we submit to this base and vulgar domination; and I for one, believing as I do, when I read these comments of the hon. Member, and consider his present Motion, that I have been selected as an object of attack for the purpose of discouraging resistance to the insidious efforts which the hon. Gentleman is daily making to weaken the foundations of property, and the authority of law, I will at least preserve myself from the reproach of having furthered the objects he has in view, by any symptom of intimidation or submission."

Mr. *Cobbett*, in rising to reply, was received with the strongest manifestations of disapprobation from both sides of the House. The hon. Member said, that more calumnious insinuations and more groundless charges than those brought against him on the present occasion had never been heard within the walls of Parliament [*shouts of dissent*]. If order was not observed while vindicating himself, he would move the adjournment of the House. If the House felt mortified in hearing him, they ought to feel still more mortification at having swallowed their own words on the 30th of April in reference to the Malt-tax. If they did not listen to him while he answered the speech of the right hon. Baronet, they would stand before the world in a light which he would not attempt to describe [*the shouting increased*]. If this interruption were continued, he must pronounce this to be the most unjust Assembly ever known. Nine-tenths of the right hon. Baronet's defence consisted of extracts read from books which were written by him (Mr. Cobbett), and the rest was made up of vulgar abuse and falsehood [*Interruption from all parts of the House.*]

The *Speaker* interposed to order, and said, the hon. Member had uttered language which no Gentleman was entitled to use, and for which he was bound to apologise.

Mr. *Cobbett:* Sir, I most readily apologise to the House. If the noble Lord (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) would only take off the Malt-tax, the House and Window-tax, and the taxes on soap and candles, he might set at naught all speculation in public confusion. But, Sir, I would much rather see public confusion than see the people trampled upon and knocked on the head, as they have been within the last few days [Here the hon. Member abruptly resumed his seat, finding it impossible to proceed any further].

At this moment Sir Robert Peel left the House, and in doing so was loudly cheered.

The House divided on Mr. Cobbett's Motion—Ayes 4; Noes 298: Majority 294.

List of the AYES.

	TELLERS.
Attwood, Thomas	Cobbett, W.
Lalor, Patrick	Fielden, John
O'Connell, John	
Roe, James	

Lord *Althorp* then said: I am not aware of any precedent for the course which I am now about to call upon the House to pursue. But never in my memory, or within my knowledge, has a personal attack been made within these walls upon such grounds, or supported like the present. I feel, therefore, that it is unnecessary to detain the House by any further expression of opinion, being confident that the feelings of every hon. Gentleman will respond to my own, and agree to this proposition—"That the Resolution which has been moved be not entered on the Minutes."

The *Speaker* put the Question, "that the proceedings be expunged."

Mr. *Cobbett:* The noble Lord has moved that the motion be not inserted in the Minutes of the Proceedings of the House. That, however, is not the way in which the Speaker has put the Question.

The *Speaker:* I will explain why I put the Question in the terms in which I did. The minutes of the proceedings are going on during the Debate, and the Motion of the noble Lord being that the Motion of the hon. Member should not be continued on the proceedings, the only way to effect that object is to expunge the Motion.

Mr. *Cobbett:* Expunging a Motion, and not putting it on the proceedings, are two different things.

The *Speaker:* I am unfortunate in not making myself understood. There is nothing which any Member moves in this House which (whatever may be the opinion of the House) does not, the moment it is moved and seconded, go upon the clerk's books. The question for the House to decide—what it owes to itself and to the public—is to consider whether, according to the merits and justice of the case, it will suffer it to remain on the books.

Mr. *Cobbett*, I observed at the outset that I supposed that a Motion would be made to expunge these proceedings, but if they be not printed on the Minutes of the House, that is quite a novel proceeding. Many things have already been done by this Parliament to overset former usages [" *question.*"] If the cries of question are continued I shall move the adjournment of the House. If this Motion is not to be printed by the order or vote of the House, then there are but two things remaining for Ministers to do—first, to let no man speak in this House without their permission, and next to move that the gallery be closed.

Mr. *Lalor* hoped that the House would indulge him whilst he stated his reasons for having been one of the very small minority who had voted on this question. He was not actuated by any personal hostility to the right hon. Baronet. It was on public grounds only, that he had ventured to be one of the minority. He was of opinion that the Bank Restriction Act had originally been the cause of the distress [*The hon. Member was here called to order*]. He thought he was speaking to the question, and must state that he considered the conduct of the right hon. Baronet had been injurious to the interests of the public.

Mr. *John Fielden* was of opinion that it would not be wise, on the part of the Government, to press the Motion.

The House divided—Ayes 295; Noes 4: Majority 291.

List of the NOES.

Attwood, Thomas
Lalor, Patrick
O'Conner, Fergus
Roe, James

TELLERS.
Cobbett, William
Fielden, John

OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH BILL.] On the Order of the Day being read for the second reading of the Lord's Day Observance Bill,

Sir *Andrew Agnew* said, that he should wish at that late hour, to postpone the discussion on this subject till Friday se'nnight.

Mr. *Warburton* would, in that case, propose, as an Amendment, that the Bill be read this day six months.

Sir *Robert Inglis* said, he had never known an instance of a measure being got rid of in the way in which the hon. member for Bridport proposed to get rid of the present. He did not envy the hon. Member, as his only object must be to stifle discussion. It was inconsistent with the common courtesy of the House, that an Amendment of such a nature should be made when an hon. Member proposed to postpone a Motion merely for the convenience of the House. The Amendment was, as far as he knew, perfectly unprecedented, perhaps the hon. Member might be able to supply an instance of the kind; but he knew of none. He hoped the hon. Member would not press his Motion to a division.

Lord *Althorp* said, it was obvious, from the petitions, that the measure of the hon. Baronet was agreeable to a great proportion of the people, though it might not be altogether popular. He thought, therefore, that at so late an hour it ought to be postponed, and he hoped that the hon. member for Bridport would not persevere in his Amendment.

Mr. *Warburton* said, he could not see that there was any inconvenience in proceeding to the debate at half-past eleven o'clock. If they were to proceed in such a course as that it would be impossible ever to get through the business of the Session. His reason for proposing the Amendment was, not in order to stifle the discussion; but, because he considered that the hon. Baronet, in postponing his Motion, was consulting his own convenience, rather than that of the House.

Sir *Andrew Agnew* in obedience to the call of the House to go on, then proceeded, and observed that he did not come forward as a volunteer in this matter. On the former occasion, he had not fully explained his measure, which had done it some injustice. The idea of the Bill had not originated with himself, but with a number of humble individuals, tradesmen in the metropolis and elsewhere. There was no provision in it which had not been prayed for by the parties to whom it was applicable. It was emphatically a Bill to prevent all manner of work on the Lord's Day, in order that every man might be free to keep it holy. He was anxious that the House should believe that all its provisions were agreeable to the great majority of tradesmen themselves. It consequently did not dictate how the Sabbath was to be employed, but it forbade a man from employing other men on that day for profit or pleasure. The hon. Baronet concluded by moving the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. *Plumptre* had great satisfaction in supporting the Bill, conformable as it was to the wishes of so numerous a body of his constituents and others; and trusted that the House would, at least, allow it to go into a Committee, where it might receive any modifications that should seem desirable. There were three classes of people to whom the Bill would be beneficial; two immediately, and one indirectly. The first was the large class of persons to whom the Sabbath was a day of bodily rest; a class not to be discarded from the attention of the House, even if the Bill had no other object in view. Another class that would be immediately affected by the Bill was that composed of persons who did not so much require the Sabbath for bodily rest, as for receiving religious instruction, and discharging religious duties. He trusted that that class would not be lightly considered by the House. They knew that there was a world beyond the grave, and were anxious to obey the commands of their heavenly Master. The third class, which would be indirectly affected by the Bill, consisted of persons whose feelings and desires ought not to be outraged; and who thought that the profanation of the Sabbath was a national disgrace, and must lead to national calamity; and that, as Christians, they could not tolerate the profanation of that holy day, without incurring the divine displeasure. An objection that had been made to the Bill was, that it was not right suddenly to check any habits which had been long established. That might be true with respect to some things; but were the habits which the Bill intended to check such as ought to be allowed to continue? Ought they not, rather, to elevate their habits to the will of God, than impiously endeavour to bring down the will of God to their habits? The idea of compelling men to be religious never entered into the heads of the framers of the Bill. They knew that compulsory service could not be acceptable to the Deity. They did not wish, therefore, to force men to be religious; all they wanted was, to give all his Majesty's subjects an opportunity of being so if they chose to embrace it; of the want of which thousands now complained, and not to withhold from them the inestimable privileges which a benevolent Creator designed for them.

Mr. *Poulter* said, that the Bill would do neither more nor less than hand over all classes of society to the mercy of common informers. For instance, it was now a frequent practice for men, on a Sunday, between the two services, to go to a news-room for a short time to read the papers. What could be more innocent? Yet, by the Bill, a penalty of 50*l.* was imposed upon the keeper of any news-room who opened it on Sunday. Again, a penalty of 10*l.* was imposed by the Bill upon any person who hired, or any person who let out, a horse on Sunday. If, therefore, a gentleman were travelling on Sunday (which certainly was not proper) with four horses, at every stage he might incur a penalty of 40*l.*; nay, he (Mr. Poulter) was not sure that he would not be liable to a double penalty at each stage, or 80*l.* The Bill rested on the erroneous principle of making the original law respecting the Sabbath delivered to the Jews, the rule of Christian observance. If the Jews had violated their Sabbath, they would have been subjected to the most severe visitations of Providence. But the Christian religion was less rigid. There was an instance under the Jewish law of a man having been put to death for picking sticks on the Sabbath. Jesus Christ required no such strictness. The fourth Commandment was no Statute to us. He was quite willing to set apart a day for the solemn worship of God, and that that worship should be accompanied by becoming sanctity; but he must protest against compulsory regulations, opposed to the sentiments and liberties of a large portion of society. He wished to see the hearts and the affections of the people improved; he did not wish to see them exposed to onerous penalties.

Mr. *Roebuck* trusted the House would at once reject the Bill; the very preamble of which called upon the House to declare, that men were commanded by the Lord to respect the Sabbath Day; an assertion in which many conscientious people were quite unable to concur. All introduction of tests of that kind was to be deprecated. He highly approved of the object of securing a day of recreation and quiet for the great mass of the population; but he as highly disapproved of the discord which the Bill was calculated to introduce into the country. He had read with great pleasure a pamphlet, by a dignitary of the Church, the object of which was to endeavour to break down unimportant religious distinctions, and to make all Christians brethren. The tendency of this Bill, on the contrary, would be further to divide and narrow sects; and to set up the means of discord among the people. What he desired was, that the people should have rest and refreshment on the seventh day. Let them look at the Bill, and see if it kept that object in view. It set out with observing, that all work ought to be prohibited on the Sabbath day. The only exclusion was, "the man servant and the maid servant;" so that although the hon. Baronet took the Jewish law as the foundation of the measure, he departed from that law in this essential particular. He was sure that those hon. Members could not have read the Bill who were not inclined at once to reject it. He would read only one of its enactments, and from that the House would see the spirit of the measure. It ran as follows;—"And be it further enacted, that every one who shall be present at any meeting, assembly, or concourse of people, upon any part of the Lord's Day, for any purpose of gaming, wagering, or betting, or for any wake, fair, baiting, or hunting any animal, cock-fighting, dog-fighting, or shooting, or any pastime of public indecorum, inconvenience, or nuisance." Now, let the House fancy a whole community obliged to agree with what any Magistrate might think proper to understand by the words, "public indecorum, inconvenience, or nuisance!" The enactment proceeded—"or for public debating upon or discussing any subject"—surely it it was difficult to conceive any mode of passing a day more unobjectionably than in calm and rational discussion—"or for public lecture, address, or speech, or who shall be present at any news-room, or club-room, shall forfeit for the first offence any sum not less than 5*s*., nor more than 10*s*.; for the second offence, not less than 10*s*., nor more than 20*s*.; and for every subsequent offence, not less than 20*s*., nor more than 5*l*." So no man was to be allowed to ask a neighbour the news, or go to a room and quietly read the papers without incurring a penalty of from 5*s*. to 5*l*. A penalty of 50*l*. was likewise to be imposed upon the keeper of any news-room who opened it on Sunday. All the common conveniences of life, all social intercourse of human beings with one another on Sundays, was interdicted by the Bill. Nay, more than that. It was well known, that persons confined in towns were frequently compelled to breathe a fetid and unwholesome atmosphere; and that many of those persons could not go to a distance which would enable them to breathe fresh air, without hiring horses for that purpose. He, himself, was compelled to be in London six days out of the seven. He was an invalid; but by this Bill he should be incapacitated from breathing fresh air on the seventh day. If, indeed, he were so rich as to have a carriage of his own, he might repair to the environs of the town; but, as it was, if the Bill were to pass, he must breathe the noxious air of the metropolis on the seventh, as well as on the other days of the week. To him that would be a great evil; and was not that the feeling of the great majority of the middle and lower classes? One provision of the Bill was to shut up baking-houses on Sundays. The consequence would be, that every poor man's wife must dress his meat for dinner; while, at present, she was allowed to spend the day in peace and quiet; and a small number of persons performed that necessary labour. By this enactment, therefore, labour on the Sunday would be multiplied a hundred-fold. Females, of all persons, ought to be exempted from labour on the Sunday, and should take that recreation which was calculated to restore them, and fit them for the toil of the approaching week. But this Bill would prevent them from doing so. He had gone last Sunday down to Greenwich, on purpose to see how the population of the metropolis amused themselves on that day. Nothing could be a more pleasing sight, or more consonant to every good feeling. The people came out for air; they were walking quietly in the Park; enjoying the pure atmosphere, breaking no commandment, and violating no law. He would oppose the hon. Baronet on religious grounds, and tell him that true religion was not so cold and narrow a system as he represented it to be. God required no such painful and absurd sacrifices as his Bill would impose on the people. The Almighty required, that we should perform our duties to one another, without one particle of asceticism. By this Bill, one set of people, having peculiar ideas respecting a particular day, wished to compel all other persons to conform to their creed, and to worship God after their manner.

Lord *Morpeth* doubted the possibility of carrying into effect the various provisions of so complicated a Bill, though he acknowledged the propriety of its principle. He should vote for the second reading, in the hope that it would receive in the Committee all the modifications requisite for making it a useful and desirable enactment.

Mr. *Estcourt* concurred in the principle of the Bill, but thought that beneficial alterations might be made in it. No one could deny that it was desirable to keep the shops shut on the Sabbath.

Lord *Althorp* believed there was no man in that House who would quarrel with the principle of the Bill; but the details were in his opinion of so extraordinary a character, that he considered they could not depart from the usual parliamentary course of opposing it at once. Nothing in fact could be done with the Bill, but what would lead to the introduction of some new measure. The Bill could not be so altered as to retain anything like its present form. For his own part, he was most anxious to support any measure which would in practice be one of protection to those who desired to keep the Sabbath as a day of rest, and not of coercion to those who did not. But this was a Bill of Pains and Penalties—uncalled for and impolitic—not desired by the public, and not deserved by them; and he could not do otherwise than oppose it in its present stage. He wished for a measure, not to compel men to be religious, but to allow and enable them to be so. It was neither consistent with religion, with morality, nor with sound policy, to interfere with the old recreations of the people. Nothing would be more unfair, impolitic, or uncalled for. He really believed that the Sabbath Day was, after all, now better observed in these realms, than it had been for the last thirty years; but he was willing, from regard to those who were interested in such points—especially the tradesmen of large towns, to forward any measure which would really be one of protection, but he could not consent to a Bill, the details of which could not be worked into any other form than to impose unjust restrictions, and unmerited penalties.

Sir *Robert Inglis* did not deem it right in Government to throw the whole weight of their influence against the Bill. Without attaching undue importance to the prayers of the people, he would wish the House to remember that this was a question on which the people of England had shown a strong and decided feeling. Without yielding their judgment, or acting on any question without the most deliberate conviction, he must say, that any subject was deserving of anxious and attentive consideration which was borne to them on the prayers of 230,000 persons. He was happy that he could agree with the noble Lord, in the opinion that, during the last thirty years, there had been a great improvement in the manner of observing the Sabbath. But was that improvement not less than might have been expected from the increased means of religious instruction, which above all other countries, we had so eminently, during that interval, possessed? The Lord's Day in this country was observed in a manner superior to that in which it was kept in any country of Europe—Scotland excepted; so much so, indeed, that foreigners constantly complained of our strictness. But the question for consideration was, whether our observance was such as it ought to be, according to the commands of Scripture? Let them remember also, the cries of those petitioners who had asked our interference on a ground which no Legislature could rightly reject—that of protection. Was the hon. and learned member for Bath aware, that no less than 7,400 journeymen bakers had petitioned the House of Commons to enable them to observe the Sabbath? Whether it were right or not to grant their prayer, it was fitting that the Legislature should consider it well. Some of those who petitioned, might be influenced by worldly motives—but it could not be questioned that many were actuated by the purest and most sacred feelings—regarding the Sabbath as a divine institution, which they ought to observe. Something was due to both these classes; and the Bill contemplated nothing—so far at least as he could understand it; except matters of trading, travelling, and labouring on the Sabbath. There were several points respecting the meetings of municipal bodies, &c., on the Lord's Day; but those were unimportant compared with the provisions which he had mentioned. Was there anything in the principle of the Bill, as applied to these three provisions, to which the noble Lord could refuse his assent? He might refuse it as to the degree in which they were applied; but was he prepared to withhold it generally from the questions of limiting labour; closing shops, and preventing travelling for hire, on Sunday? The subject was attended with difficulty, in respect to interference with the amusements of the poor; and it was true that legislative enactments might press harder on the poor man than on the rich. But that arose from the nature of things; it was impossible to prevent either from doing what he pleased in his own house; but there was no such prohibition in this Bill. It did not apply to the poor man in his own house; it followed him to the public house—to the place where those scenes were acted which violated every law of decency, and morality. It improved the present law with respect to public-houses and beer-shops; and interfered with the resort to those places at particular hours of the day. Among the petitions presented to the House was one from his constituents—presented by his hon. friend and Colleague—in which the petitioners stated that they believed it to be the bounden duty of every Christian country to provide for the religious observance of the Lord's Day; and that the existing laws were insufficient to secure the attainment of that object. In the evidence given before the Committee on this subject, which sat last year, several gentlemen—police Magistrates and others—connected with the administration of justice stated, that the laws were inoperative—that they had, in fact, become a mere nullity; so much so, that persons had been known to offer to pay the fine for keeping their shops open at the beginning of the day. They said, "We will not give you the trouble of fining us; here is the amount of the fine, and we will keep our shops open, and violate the laws." Could the noble Lord justify such a state of things as this? If the noble Lord, therefore, would not pledge himself and his Majesty's Government to the introduction of a Bill which would at least repress such practices, he was not justified in calling on the House to resist this Bill, and in refusing his assent to its principle, solely because he objected to the provisions by which it was proposed to carry the principle into effect. He could assure the noble Lord, that he would best consult the interests of the Government, and the wishes of the people, by allowing the Bill to go into Committee.

Sir *Matthew White Ridley* said, he would oppose the present measure, because he considered it a Bill of pains and penalties, and not calculated to secure the better observance of the Sabbath, or conduce to the interests of religion.

Mr. *Lefroy* considered they ought not to hesitate in going into Committee. The Bill was founded on such principles as, with a slight modification of its details, could not fail to be acceptable to a majority of that House.

Mr. *Wynn* was much more disposed to trust to the gradual growth of religion, than to any new penal enactments. There was a clause, at the end of the Bill, which declared that it was not to extend to works of piety, charity, or necessity. Who was to be the judge of what constituted works of this description? Must it not be the individual who was setting out on it? If he could convince himself that a work on which he was about to engage was a work of charity or necessity—and thus feel himself at liberty to travel on a Sunday in furthering it—was it necessary for him to satisfy every innkeeper that he was really at liberty to hire post-horses? Suppose the case of an officer hastening to join his regiment—or of a child to visit a dying parent—it would be urgent on both that they travelled without let or hindrance, and rapidly; yet they must, under this Bill, first satisfy every innkeeper, that they were engaged on a work of "necessity." To proceed as the Bill proposed, appeared to him to be acting on a novel principle of legislation. At all events, it went much too far, and he recommended that it should be withdrawn.

Mr. *Robert Grant* contended, that the observance of the Sabbath was a proper object of national care. If the present Bill were thrown out, he feared the people would think that the Reformed Parliament was disposed to deny the principle of this and former enactments on the same subject. He should, therefore, vote for the second reading.

Mr. *Wason* suggested, that the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee. If that were consented to, he would vote for the second reading, not otherwise.

Mr. *Petre* could not support the second reading of the Bill, though he had voted for the first stage, unless he were assured, that in the Committee it would be very considerably altered.

Mr. *Hill* hoped, that the Bill would be withdrawn, at least for the present, as he was convinced that such a measure would rather lead to the abolition of the present observance of the Sabbath than its due observance. It was, in fact, a Bill for the desecration of the Sabbath by the rich, and for the observance of it by the poor. While the chimney of the rich man might be reeking, and all his cooks employed, the poor man must be satisfied with his humble and Saturday-dressed dinner. This was not the time when the two classes ought to be brought into opposition, and least of all on such a question as the observance of the Sabbath.

Mr. *Shaw* thought, that Parliament ought to legislate no further than to regulate public trading; but, although the Bill went too far, it could be sufficiently altered and improved in the Committee. It was the moral and sound sense of the country which required some enactment on the subject, and he hoped Ministers would not set themselves against all improvement in this respect.

Mr. *Hardy* was of opinion, that the present laws were inadequate for the purpose, and that a Christian House of Commons ought to do something in order to cause the due observance of the Sabbath, which was instituted, not so much for the vexation of man, as for the honour of the Lord.

Mr. *Rotch* regretted that the subject had been forced upon the House—he had himself been made the humble instrument of presenting various petitions, most carefully got up—he meant petitions read to every person who had signed them—and the question was, whether the prayer of 200,000 petitioners was to be disregarded? If the Bill was inefficient, where was the hon. Baronet to obtain assistance to render it efficient but in a Committee of that House? He could get no assistance elsewhere. He was beset with opposition, and, unless a person was an enthusiast, he could scarcely get such a measure through. In spite of ridicule, he would vote for the second reading.

Mr. *Fowell Buxton* would only detain the House two minutes, but could not avoid saying, in answer to the hon. member for Bath, that the preamble of this Bill was copied from another on the same subject 107 years old. Bishop Porteus had said, and most truly, that the due observance of the Sabbath was the great bulwark of Christianity.

Mr. *Andrew Johnston* fully concurred in the principle and many of the details of the Bill. The opposition to the measure, and the disturbance in the House indicative of impatience, proceeded from that portion of the Members who were opposed to the Protestant religion. They might well object to the due observance of the Sabbath, on which the safety of the Church mainly depended. The hon. member for Dublin, at a meeting of the Trades' Union, had told those assembled, that the Sunday ought not to be spent in gloomy gravity, which sickened the human countenance and sallowed the complexion, and that he highly approved of the manner in which the Sabbath was usually spent in England. In his own country, the hon. and learned Member said, he had witnessed with pleasure dancing, playing at ball, and other amusements. But when such were the opinions of the hon. and learned Member, and his friend, he hoped they would have no influence over a Christian assembly.

Mr. *P. Howard* could support so few of the clauses of the Bill which had been introduced by the hon. Baronet, that he must vote against the second reading, though he respected the motives of those who adopted a different course. A bill should give something like an accurate and defined outline of what was afterwards to be filled up and perfected in Committee, otherwise the process of amending would be endless, and the result almost always unsatisfactory. He was disposed to take effectual means of preventing any unnecessary barter or business on the Lord's Day, especially during the hours of divine service; but must, at the same time, remark, that many of the causes which led to the more serious violations of the Sabbath could not be reached by legislation. A practice (for he would only detail one instance), existed in Manchester, and many of the larger towns, of paying the workmen their wages in the public-house, at a late hour on Saturdays. This custom, almost as a certain consequence, led to a good deal of drunkenness and profaneness on the Sunday morning; and yet, consistently with any sound notions of freedom, it was difficult, impossible, he would say, to sanction interference, and fix by law any precise time when the parties should settle their accounts. To the vast discretionary power which the Bill proposed to give to Magistrates, he (Mr. Howard) was much opposed; and it would place, not only every Magistrate, but every toll-keeper, under the painful responsibility of judging whether or no a man had a justifiable cause for travelling on Sunday. He was not inclined to go so far in measures of restriction as the hon. Member (Mr. A. Johnston) who had last addressed the House. He did not wish to find fault with a certain degree of innocent recreation on the Sunday evening; and he suspected it was in human nature, that if the people were so rigidly debarred from all reasonable enjoyment, they would resort to those more guilty pleasures, which were alike condemned by the professors of every creed.

Amendment withdrawn, and the House divided on the question, that the Bill be then read a second time: Ayes 73; Noes 79—Majority 6.

Bill thrown out.

List of the AYES.

ENGLAND.
Ashley, Lord
Attwood, M.
Bethell, R,
Blackstone, W. S.
Bolling, Wm.
Bouverie, Hon. D.
Brigstock, W. P.
Brocklehurst, J.
Buller, E.
Buxton, T. F.
Childers, J.
Dare, Robert Hall
Estcourt, T. B.
Evans, W.
Fenton, J.
Finch, Geo.
Foster, C. S.
Gaskell, J. M.
Gladstone, H. E.
Grant, Rt. Hon. Rob.
Grey, Sir G.
Hardy, J.
Hawes, Benjamin
Ingham, R.
Inglis, Sir R.
Jervis, J.
Lamont, Captain N.
Lennox, Lord A.
Mandeville, Lord
Marryat, J.
Marsland, Thomas
Morpeth, Viscount
Moseley, Sir O.
Nicholl, John
Parker, J.
Pease, J.
Petre, Hon. E.
Pinney, W.
Plumptre, J. P.
Pryme, G.
Rotch, Benjamin
Ryle, J.
Scott, Sir G.
Shawe, R. N.
Sheppard, Thomas
Simeon, Sir R. G.
Stanley, E.
Staunton, Sir G. T.
Sykes, S.
Wason, R.
Wilbraham, George
Williams, A.
Willoughby, Sir H.
Young, G. F.

SCOTLAND.
Callander, J. H.
Fergusson, R. C.
Hallyburton, Hon. D. G
Hay, Sir J.
Johnstone, H.
Johnstone, A.
Maxwell, Sir J.
Maxwell, J.
Ross, H.
Stewart, R.
Wallace, R.

IRELAND.
Bateson, Sir Robert
Hayes, Sir E.
Lefroy, Anthony
Lefroy, Thomas
Martin, John
Maxwell, T. W.
Perceval, Colonel
Young, J.

TELLERS.
Agnew, Sir A.
Shaw, F.

PAIRED OFF.
Todd, J. R.

* * *

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, May 17, 1833.

MINUTES.] Bills. Received the Royal Assent:—Tile Duties; Cotton Duties; and Exchequer Court (Scotland).

Petitions presented. By the Earl of MEATH, from Dublin, for Poor Laws to Ireland.—By a NOBLE LORD, from St. George's, Bloomsbury, and another Parish, against the Assessed Taxes.—By the Marquess of STAFFORD, from several Dissenting Congregations, for Relief to the Dissenters from their Grievances, respecting Registration, Marriage, and Church Rates.—By the Earl of RODEN, from several Places, for the Better Observance of the Lord's Day.—By Lord SEGRAVE, from Dursley; and the Earl of WICKLOW, from Wotton-under-Edge, for the Revision or Abolition of the Sale of Beer Act.—By the Duke of CLEVELAND, the Earls of RODEN, ROSEBERY, ALBEMARLE, and CHARLEMONT, the Marquesses of LANSDOWN and STAFFORD, and Lords SALTOUN and SUFFIELD, from a great Number of Places,—for the Immediate Abolition of Slavery.

WINE DUTIES.] The Earl of *Aberdeen* said, in reference to a subject of conversation in that House a few weeks back, he rose to move for some information connected with it—he alluded to the Wine Duties. It appeared to be admitted by Ministers that their anticipations, when they proposed the alterations last year, had not been realized. He had predicted that which had now turned out to be the fact. The Motion which he would submit would show the result of the alteration of the law, and he apprehended it would fully prove what he now asserted. The noble Earl then moved "That there be laid before this House an account of the quantity of Wine imported into Great Britain for the last five years, ending the 5th of January 1833, specifying the amount imported each year, distinguishing the country from whence imported; also an account of the amount of duties paid upon each description of Wine for the like period; also an account of the quantity of French, Cape, and other Wines in stock up to the 5th of January 1833."

Lord *Auckland* said, he could have no possible objection to the Motion; on the contrary, he was very glad that it had been made. The result would show that the prediction of the noble Lord was not verified in the way he apprehended. He had a prediction to oppose to that of the noble Earl. When the measure was in agitation it was urged that, by altering the duties on Wines in the manner accomplished, a better feeling would arise in France, and this assertion had been fully borne out by the fact. He was very happy to bear this testimony upon the subject, that the alteration upon public feeling in France was most advantageous to the commerce of both countries.

The Earl of *Aberdeen* said, in a financial point of view, he had regarded the measure as one which would not realise the anticipations of Ministers; but in a political point of view he must ever deprecate it, even were its financial advantages much greater than in reality they were; for they had been dearly purchased, having been obtained at the expense of national faith, and in opposition to existing treaties. When the Bill was in progress he had entered his protest against it, and that protest was recorded among the Journals of the House.

Lord *Ellenborough* felt great satisfaction that the returns had been asked for; and was persuaded that the result would show, that what had been predicted by his noble friend was perfectly accurate.

Motion agreed to.

ABOLITION OF SLAVERY.] The Duke of *Wellington* presented petitions from Fortrose, and Ross, for the Abolition of Slavery, but with due regard to the honour and interests of all parties concerned. He concurrred in the view expressed in these petitions, rather than in that expressed in the petitions presented by the noble Baron. It was more consistent with the Resolutions of Parliament for the protection of property. He deprecated these premature discussions, they had inflicted great injury and ruin upon all persons connected with the West Indies. He had at a great public ceremony that morning met no less than six officers, who had been nearly ruined by the agitation, the greater part of whom had no slaves. There were many men who had vested their property in the West Indies, who, though they never had a slave themselves, were completely ruined. He did not wish to enter into the subject, but he could not avoid taking notice of the matter; for he saw that the Ministers had rushed into the subject surrounded with difficulties. They had brought it forward prematurely, and had incurred a responsibility, both moral and political, greater than had ever been incurred by any Ministers within his recollection. With respect to the proposition recently made in the other House, it ought never to be forgotten that the Resolutions of 1822, and the right hon. Gentleman who moved those Resolutions, stated that to effect any good for the slaves, it was indispensable to have the assistance of the colonists and of the colonial assemblies.

Lord *Suffield* said, that the majority of those from whom he had presented petitions, did not recognise the right of one man to hold property in other men, and therefore they would not consent to compensation, which might imply such a right. At the same time they were ready to give relief to those planters, whose property might be destroyed by immediate abolition. The noble Duke had not attended the Committee which sat last Session; if the noble Duke had, he was assured that the noble Duke would have formed a very different opinion from that which he now entertained. That the measure proposed by his Majesty's Ministers was premature he denied, because there was not one person connected with the West Indies, who did not admit that it was impossible that things could remain as at present.

The Duke of *Wellington* begged leave to explain to their Lordships why he had not attended the Committee. He had the misfortune not to hear on one side. He found it, therefore, very difficult to make out what went on in such a Committee, and therefore he thought that he might spend his time more advantageously than in attending it. There was another Committee, which he had not attended, though he took considerable interest in the subject for the same reason—the Committee which sat to inquire into tithes. What he had meant to say on the subject of the slaves, was that emancipation would put an end to the means of making them work, and so injure the property of the planter. With respect to not being friendly to the abolition, he wished to say that he had done more in the way of negotiation, written more notes, and entered into more treaties on the subject of the abolition of the slave trade, and of putting an end to slavery than any man living. A noble friend of his had perhaps done more than he had, but except that noble friend he had done more than any other man to promote the abolition. Nobody had gone further or more strenuously wished to effect that object than he had.

Lord *Suffield*, in presenting another petition on the same subject from the Methodists of the new connection of Boston, Leicestershire, entered into further explanations, and contended that nothing whatever had been done by the colonists to promote the emancipation of the slaves, or to comply with the expressed wishes of the people of England.

Lord *Wynford* said, that much had been done by the colonists; and had the noble Lord been present on a former occasion, he would have heard the Primate explain a great number of measures which had been adopted to relieve the slaves, and prepare them for free labour. Certainly he thought that to put an end to apprehension altogether on their part, would put an end to labour, and would destroy the West-India interest. It would be equally injurious to the masters and slaves, and would inflict irreparable injury on our commerce, as well as endanger the credit of the country. When it was said that these petitioners could not recognise the principles of men having the property of men, let him tell them that the Apostles had recognised slavery, and he presumed that they did not pretend to be better Christians than the Apostles. That principle had in truth been recognised from the earliest ages. At the same time he was anxious to get rid of that species of property as soon as possible. He was glad to hear that the petitioners were ready to give compensation [Lord *Suffield* said, not compensation but relief]—he did not know the difference, but he hoped these petitioners had calculated the amount which would be required to give relief, if they destroyed the property of the planters, for he doubted whether they would be ready and willing to supply the sum which would be required.

Lord *Suffield* knew the Archbishop of Canterbury well enough to be aware that he was incapable of stating that which he did not strictly believe to be true; but still he would assert that the assertions of the reverend Prelate were in themselves false, when he stated the number of converts made amongst the negroes by the clergy of the Established Church. The fact was, that the converts were made by the dissenting clergy, and by them alone. The Church of England was certainly popular in our West-India colonies, because they meddled less than the dissenters. If this were otherwise, how would the noble Lord attempt to account for the recent destruction of the Methodist chapels in Jamaica?

The Marquess of *Bute* could not sit quietly by, and hear such an attack made upon the Established Church of this country. He thought it a most uncalled-for attack on the part of the noble Lord; an attack, indeed, which never would have been made if the noble Earl had heard the report of the religious society on education, and the improvement of the condition of the negroes, which was altogether supported by members of the Church of England.

The Earl of *Haddington* said, his noble friend opposite had not only attacked the Established Church, but assumed the fact, that its members were valued, because they did nothing. He sincerely hoped, that some noble Lord, better acquainted with the subject, would enter upon a proper defence of the Established Church against so serious, and, he would add, so unfounded a charge.

Lord *Suffield* denied, that he had cast any general imputation upon the Church, but he would refer to the case of the rev. Mr. Brydges, Chaplain to the Governor, who had been convicted of having improperly flogged his female slaves.

STAFFORD INDEMNITY BILL.] The Earl of Radnor moved the Order of the Day for the further Consideration of the Report on the Stafford Bribery Bill.

The Duke of *Wellington* said, that when he had first heard of the Bill, he had felt a great objection to it, because he thought it was more calculated to encourage than to prevent bribery; and if the Bill had not been much altered up-stairs, he should have felt it his duty to have opposed its passing into a law. Evidence had, however, been given before that

Committee, which had proved in the clearest manner, that bribery, to an unparalleled extent, had prevailed in the borough of Stafford for a great many years, and the Committee were unanimously of opinion, that the preamble of the Bill had been fully proved. Under these circumstances, he concurred in the propriety of giving the Select Committee of the House of Commons the powers of indemnifying witnesses, as provided in this Bill; which had been also greatly improved in another respect—namely, that the indemnification should not be extended to the candidates at the last election. He thought it was essentially necessary, that those who had carried on the bribery should not be exempted from the operation of the law. Under all these circumstances, he should withdraw his opposition to the Bill.

Report agreed to.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, May 17, 1833.

Minutes.] Papers ordered. On the Motion of Mr. Grote, an Account of the Number of Commissions of Bankruptcy issued in each year, from 1822 to 1832.—On the Motion of Mr. Alderman Thompson, an Account of all Vessels detained in British Ports, under the Order in Council of the 6th of November, and of such as have been Liberated under the Order in Council of the 3rd of December: also Copies of the Applications made to the Privy Council for the Release of Vessels and their Cargoes, with a Statement of the Grounds on which such Applications have been granted or rejected.—On the Motion of Mr. Pryme, an Account of the Amount of the House and Window Tax for the City of Oxford and Town of Cambridge, and the Amount of Surcharge.—On the Motion of Mr. Hume, a Copy of the New Charter of Justice lately granted to the Island of Ceylon.

Petitions presented. By Mr. Hyett, from Minchinhampton, for the Repeal of the Duties on Articles of Clerkship; and from Stroud, Woodchester, and other Places, for the Repeal of the Sale of Beer Act.—By Mr. Pease, Lord Sandon, Mr. J. Smith, and Sir M. W. Ridley, from several Places,—for the Repeal of the Sale of Beer Act; and by Mr. Philpotts, from several Places, against the Repeal of that Act.—By Mr. Oliphant, from Perth, for Amending the Bankrupt Laws (Scotland).—By Mr. Philpotts, from Gloucester, for an Alteration of the Law relative to the Admission of Notaries Public; and from the same Place, for Vote by Ballot.—By Mr. Scott, from Winchester, for a Repeal of the Malt Duty.—By Mr. G. F. Young, from the Shipowners of Newcastle, for a Repeal of the Duty on Marine Insurances.—By Mr. Buckingham, from Preston, for the Suppression of Spirit and Beer Shops.—By Sir Richard Keane, from Cappoquin, for Relief from the Excessive Assessment.—By Mr. Parker, from Sheffield, against the Highway Bill; and from the Cotton Spinners and Manufacturers of the same Place, for a Commission of Inquiry.—By Mr. J. Smith, from Borrowstowness, for an Inquiry into the Distressed State of the Shipping Interest.—By Mr. Tooke, from the Independents of Christ Church (Hants), for a Charter to the London University; and from several Metropolitan Parishes, for making extra-parochial Places contributory to the Poor, and other Rates.—By Mr. Gillon and Mr. Oliphant, from several Places in Scotland, for Alterations in the Royal Burghs (Scotland) Bill.—By Mr. Lyall, from Merchants and Shipowners of London; and Mr. G. F. Young, from Newcastle,—against the Dutch Embargo.—By Mr. Alderman Thompson, from Sunderland, and other Places, in favour of the Jewish Civil Disabilities Bill.—By Mr. J. M Gaskell, from Madely, for the benefit of a Resident Magistrate.—By Mr. J. Oswald, from the Hand-loom Weavers of Bridgetown, Glasgow, for a Board of Trade, and for Relief.—By Mr. Marjoribanks, from Dingwall, for an Alteration in the present System of Church Patronage in Scotland.—By Mr. Dugdale, from Sutton, Coldfield, and Hillmorton, for the Better Observance of the Sabbath, and against the Sale of Beer Act.—By Mr. A. Johnston, from St. Andrew's; and Mr. Marjoribanks, from Dingwall,—for Alterations in the Royal Burgh (Scotland) Bill.—By Lord Eastnor, from Banff; and Sir George Staunton, from Bursledon Bridge,—for the total Repeal of the Malt Tax.—By Mr. Mostyn, from Holywell, against the Assessed Taxes; and from another Place in Wales, for Amending the present State of the Established Church in Wales.—By Mr. F. Shaw, from several Places in Ireland, against the Church Temporalities (Ireland) Bill; and from one Place, for a Provision for the Infirm and Helpless Poor of Ireland; but opposing the Introduction of Poor Laws; another from the same Place, against the New System of Education; and from Dungannon, for a Revision of the Criminal Laws.

Presentation of Petitions.] Mr. *Fergus O'Connor* gave notice, that he meant to move a Resolution to this effect, that the absence of Ministers from the House of Commons during the presentation of Petitions, at the morning sittings, is an insult to the House of Commons, and an injustice to the people of England. As no Ministers were there to attend to the petitions of the people, it seemed to him to be quite unnecessary to go through the farce of presenting them. He had petitions intrusted to him for presentation, but he would not bring them forward in the absence of Ministers. The only benefit the people had obtained from the Reformed Parliament was, to have their petitions thrust into a bag under the Table, unheeded by those whose duty it was to attend to them. They might just as well be thrown into a bag hung up in the Library, or in some distant room in the building, without being brought into the House of Commons at all. It was quite ridiculous to think that such a course of proceeding could be suffered to go on. If they were merely to have a bauble in this Reform Act, he trusted some hon. Member would come forward and move its repeal. No earthly good had been done; on the contrary, they had raised the expectations of the people, by the hopes they held out, to a height far beyond what they found themselves able to meet: they neglected their business in that House, and if they continued thus to absent themselves when they ought to be present, he would feel it to be his duty to move, "That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, to dissolve the Parliament."

Abolition of Slavery.] Mr. *William C. Gladstone* presented a Petition from Portarlington for the Abolition of Slavery. He wished then to allude to certain observations made by the noble Lord, the late Under-Secretary for the Colonies, in his speech to the House on Tuesday night. The noble Lord had selected an estate in Demerara, belonging to his nearest relative, for the purpose of showing what a destruction of human life had taken place in the West Indies, from the manner in which the slaves were worked. The noble Lord stated, that, in three years, a decrease of seventy-one slaves had taken place on the estate of Vreeden Hoop, which he attributed to the increased cultivation of sugar; but the noble Lord omitted to state the real cause of this decrease, in the very large proportion of Africans upon the estate. When it came into the possession of his father, it was so weak, owing to the great number of Africans upon it, that he was obliged to add 200 people to the gang. It was notorious, that Africans were imported into Demerara and Trinidad up to a later period than into any other colony; and he should, when the proper time arrived, be able to prove, that the decrease on Vreeden Hoop was among the old Africans, and that there was an increase going on in the Creole population, which would be an answer to the statement of the noble Lord. The quantity of sugar produced, said by the noble Lord to be 1,900 lbs. per head annually, was small in proportion to that produced on many other estates. Within a short period, the cultivation of cotton in Demerara had been abandoned, and that of coffee very much diminished, and the people employed in these sources of production had been transferred to the cultivation of sugar. Demerara, too, was peculiarly circumstanced; for, owing to the nature of the soil, sugar was made all the year round; and, consequently, the labour of the same number of negroes distributed over the year, would, in that colony, produce a given quantity of sugar with less injury to the people, than a similar number in other colonies working only at the stated periods of crop. He was ready to admit that this cultivation was of a more severe character than others; and he would ask, were there not certain employments in this and other countries more destructive to life than others? He would only instance those of painting, and working in lead mines, both of which were well known to have that tendency. The noble Lord attempted to impugn the character of the gentleman acting as manager of his father's estates; and in making this selection, he had certainly been most unfortunate; for there was not an individual in the colony more proverbial for humanity, and the kind treatment of his slaves, than Mr. Maclean. That gentleman had acted in judicial capacities, and had, during his long residence, been appointed by the Orphan Chamber to very important trusts. He held in his hand two letters from Mr. Maclean, in which that gentleman spoke in the kindest terms of the people under his charge; described their state of happiness, content, and healthiness; their good conduct, and the infrequency of severe punishment; and recommended certain additional comforts, which he said the slaves well deserved. It was stated by the noble Lord, that Mr. Moss, a gentleman of the highest respectability, had transferred the charge of his estate from his former manager, to the individual just alluded to. He had done so; but the fact was, that up to that period his estate was a source of loss, rather than of profit, owing to the idle habits of the people.

Mr. *Marryat* had been instructed, on behalf of the colony of Grenada, whose interests he represented, to correct some of the mis-statements contained in the speech of the right hon. Secretary for the colonies; but, before entering into particulars, he could not but deeply regret the tone and temper of that speech towards the Colonial Assemblies. The right hon. Secretary truly stated, that almost insurmountable difficulties met him on every side, in the adjustment of this important question. What then could be the motive or policy of gratuitously raising up a still greater difficulty in courting, as it were, the hostility of those men through whom, and by whom alone, any plan could be safely and satisfactorily carried into execution? Supposing, even, that the accusations were true, was it fair or candid to use such language towards men who were not in a situation to defend their conduct? In rejecting the measures proposed by the

Government, these Legislatures had acted, not in a spirit of " scorn and mockery," but he believed, upon a conscientious conviction, that while a system of slavery existed, the power of the master must be absolute; and in this they had been fully borne out by the testimony of the noble Lord, the late Under-Secretary for the Colonies, who stated, that they had done wisely in rejecting the Orders in Council attempted to be imposed upon them, and that he believed a greater amount of punishment was inflicted in Dominica, under the mitigated system of slavery, than in Jamaica, where the power of the master was absolute. That speech was a complete answer to the charges of the right hon. Secretary against the Colonial Legislatures. With respect to the measure of the right hon. Secretary, he must express his deep disappointment at it, for it was neither safe nor satisfactory. With every disposition to bring this most complicated question to a satisfactory adjustment, admitting that the time was now arrived, when a definite period must be fixed for the extinction of slavery, he could not conscientiously give the measure, as it now stood, his support. He trusted, however, that before it was again brought forward, such modifications would be made, as would remove his objections; for in its present shape it would be found to be impracticable. He would remind the House, that by the Acts of the Grenada Legislature, slave evidence was admitted on all trials in civil and criminal cases, in the same manner in every respect as the testimony of free persons was received; that slaves were allowed property almost without restriction; that punishments were recorded; that the use of the whip was abolished in the field since 1825? and that manumissions, encouragement to marriage, prevention of separation of families, and religious instruction, had been provided for. He could confirm this by referring to the despatches of Lord Bathurst and Sir George Murray, in which were acknowledged the spirit of liberality and benevolence that characterized the Acts of the Grenada Legislature. He regretted to state this in the absence of every member of his Majesty's Government; but he could not permit the assertions of the right hon. Secretary to remain any longer without contradiction.

Petition laid on the Table.

POWER OF THE SECRETARY AT WAR.] Colonel *Evans* said, he was anxious to put a question to the hon. Gentleman opposite, the Secretary at War; and he could assure him, that he did so with all respect for the office he held, and with every good feeling towards himself personally. The question was, however, one of great public importance, and not merely of personal interest. During a recent election contest, a statement appeared in the public prints assuming that the person holding the office of Secretary at War had the power at his own pleasure to remove any officer on the half-pay list from his Majesty's service. Undoubtedly the reports of public proceedings were usually very accurate, but during elections, and at times of great excitement, the press, at least some portion of the press, was not very scrupulous in regard to the object which they had in view. He was bound, therefore, to assume, that it was in consequence of some warp or partizanship, that this statement was made. In a subsequent correction of the statement, however, this assumed power of the Secretary at War to remove an officer on the half-pay list without any cause assigned, was not distinctly disclaimed. He thought the House would agree with him, that this was a matter which ought to be clearly ascertained, both with reference to the large class of persons holding Commissions under his Majesty, and to the freedom of election, and the privileges of that House. Without any factious motive whatever, he was therefore anxious that his Majesty's Government should have an opportunity of explaining their views upon the subject; for, if any Officer holding a Commission under the Crown were liable to be removed at—

The *Speaker* begged the hon. and gallant Member would confine himself to his question.

Colonel *Evans* said, that the question which he rose to put was, whether the Secretary at War had the power to remove at his pleasure any Officer on the Half-pay List from his Majesty's service?

Mr. *Ellice* said, he had no hesitation in answering the question put to him by the hon. and gallant Colonel. If, unfortunately, it appeared necessary to remove any Officer from the Half-pay List, it was the duty of the Secretary at War to take his Majesty's pleasure on the subject; and the Secretary at War was responsible for the advice which he might give his Majesty. He (Mr. Ellice) had searched the records of the War Office, and he found, that there was no instance of the removal of any Officer from the Half-pay List of the Army, who had not been removed in consequence of some stain upon his character.

Colonel *Evans* observed, that he was then to understand, that the power to which he had referred was not vested in the Secretary at War?

Mr. *Ellice* hoped, that he should not be misunderstood. What he had stated was, that if a case should unfortunately arise which appeared to his Majesty's Government to call for the dismissal of an officer, it was the province of the Secretary at War to take his Majesty's pleasure on the subject, and for the advice which he might give his Majesty he was responsible.

Colonel *Evans* repeated his wish to know distinctly whether the power rested in the Secretary at War, or not?

Lord *Althorp* said, the answer to that question was, that it was for the Secretary at War to give advice to the Crown on the subject. The Crown had the undoubted prerogative of striking off any Officer from the Half-pay List; but the Secretary at War was responsible for whatever advice he might give the Crown.

CORN-LAWS.] Mr. *Wolryche Whitmore* said, he would deal with the subject he wished to bring under the notice of the House, as concisely as possible, being well aware that it was of a very dry unentertaining nature. Still it was one of great importance, deserving the maturest consideration of every hon. Member of that House. It would be recollected, that in former years he had, on more than one occasion, introduced the subject of the Corn-laws to their notice, and if latterly he had abstained from troubling the House, it was not from any apathy he had fallen into, but for two reasons, which he would then state. The first was, that he was anxious to see how the law of 1828 worked; and the second was, that in a House of Commons constituted as it used to be, he would not look for a just and impartial consideration of the Question. But the law of 1828 had now been tried, and a change had happily taken place in the Representative system, so that the great interest which hitherto had possessed no fair and adequate Representation, could now boast of being fairly represented. Still he did not mean to say, that this was a question concerning the manufacturer alone. He would not confine it within any such compass, it concerned every interest in the kingdom, and he was satisfied, that a change in the Corn-laws would prove as advantageous to the agricultural as to the commercial and trading community. He would first ascertain the operation of the present law, and see whether it had really accomplished the object which its framers professed to have in view. He wished to inquire, whether the Bill of 1828, though an improvement on that of 1815, did not contain the seeds of the evils which were complained of in the original measure. His greatest objection to the present Bill was, that it adopted the most objectionable principle of that passed in 1815, by which a certain price was stated, below which no foreign corn could be admitted. To this extent, at least, the measure of 1828 was founded on that of 1815, at which time, it should be recollected, the importation price was fixed at 80*s*. per quarter. He maintained, that the principle of both measures was radically vicious, that they did not secure the home grower against fluctuations of prices, and that the great feature, particularly of the Bill of 1828—the sliding scale of duties on foreign corn imported—did not keep down prices, or keep them steady, did not secure us a foreign supply when such supply would be advantageous, and increased it when it could only injure the home produce; and, in fact, by encouraging speculation, and hence gambling, in the Corn-trade, induced more corn to be warehoused here than would be under a perfectly free corn-trade. Hon. Members would err greatly in attributing the comparative steadiness, with a rising tendency of prices, between 1815 and 1819, and between 1828 and 1831, the year immediately succeeding the two Corn-bills, to the working of those Bills, because the fact was, the steadiness and the rise were owing to deficient harvests in those years. Were hon. Members fully aware of the nature and working of the Bill of 1828? It admitted foreign corn at a duty of 24*s*. 8*d*., when the price in the home market was 62*s*.; the duty diminished 1*s*. for every 1*s*. of increase of price up to 66*s*. and 67*s*., when the duty was 20*s*. 8*d*. On the other hand, the duty increased 1*s*. for every 1*s.* diminution of price under 62*s.* When the price arrived at 67*s.*, a considerable diminution of duty took place; so much so, that at 68*s.* 69*s.*, and 70*s.*, the duty was but 10*s.*; at 71*s.* the duty was 6*s.* 8*d.*; and at 72*s.* and upwards, but 2*s.* 8*d.* Now, on the face of it, this sliding or fluctuating scale opened the door to endless scheming, and speculation, and gambling, and uncertainty, and revulsions, which placed the foreign corn-trade on quite another footing than that wholesome system of supply and demand which under an honest and free system of trade alone did and alone ought, to regulate the price. Instead of our being supplied with foreign corn in proportion to our natural wants, that is, according as the price varied from 62*s.*, the assumed pivot or standard of home protection, this scale occasioned a much smaller import when the duty was high—that is, the price moderate—than was desirable, and a much larger supply when the duty was low—that is, the price high—than was necessary or expedient. The dealer in foreign corn purchased it at a low rate, warehoused his corn, and kept it under bond till it was admissible at the lowest possible duty, that is, till its price would realize the largest profits; and as this warehousing was a general system of speculation, and as prices were highest just at autumn, ere the new year's supply came in, it followed in practice, that the market was then deluged far beyond the demand, till prices fell so as to seriously affect the price of the new home-grown grain. He would beg the attention of the House to what occurred in 1830, as that year would furnish a fair specimen of the working of the system. In consequence of the deficiency of the harvest of 1829, there was a large importation of corn, and during the spring of 1830 prices had been falling, and the duty proportionably rising. In the month of May, in that year, the price of wheat was 66*s.*, with a duty of 20*s.* 8*d.* The price of wheat continued to rise through the summer of 1830, up till about a fortnight before the harvest. At that time there was a great accumulation of foreign corn in bond. The price rose to 72*s.*, and the duty fell to 2*s.* 8*d.* a-quarter. The consequence was, that in the latter end of August, and in the beginning of September, not less than 1,200,000 quarters were taken out of bond. Had the harvest that year not been deficient, the large importations would have pressed upon the markets, and the price might have been reduced as low as in 1822. If country Gentlemen thought, that the existing law produced equality of price, they were never more mistaken; the supply would always be regulated by the demand, and that alone would be sufficient to preserve as much equality as it was possible in such a commodity to obtain. If, then, the present law were ineffectual for its purpose, why, he asked, should it be continued? The fact, that it encouraged gambling and speculation in corn to an enormous extent, to the injury of the home-grower, and to the destruction of regular wholesome trade, was sufficient to make them desire to have it repealed. Sometimes much more than was wanted, was thrown upon the market, and anything but a regular supply was the consequence of the Bill as it stood. The Hon. Member then adverted to the number of Inclosure Bills, which had passed the House before the Corn-law was passed, in order to show, that the trade in corn being free with a small duty on the importation, had not had any effect in checking cultivation. From 1771 to 1791, 869 Inclosure Bills had passed—making an average of forty-three per annum. From 1791 to 1804, the number of bills was 900, or sixty-nine per annum; and yet during this period, the Corn-trade was virtually free, and it was a period of great comparative prosperity to all classes. As to the price of corn during these periods, he must observe, that from the year 1790 to 1799, the average price had only varied from 45*s.* 4*d.* per quarter to 51*s.* per quarter, which showed, that when there was a regular importation of corn, prices had been steady, while the agriculturists had been prosperous. To show, that we ran no risk of obtaining a supply, he called the attention of the House to the extraordinary fact, that in 1810, during the war, not less than 1,500,000 quarters of wheat were imported from France and the Netherlands. Under any circumstances, then, even the most unfavourable, a supply might be obtained, since the rancorous hostility, then carried on against Great Britain, could not prevent the importation. But without wearying the attention of the House, he would proceed at once to point out the evil workings of the Bill of 1815—evils which far exceeded in magnitude and extent all possible evils for which they were intended to be a remedy. He was aware that details were, at all times, wearisome, and without, therefore, going further into them, he would state the alteration it was his wish to make in the present law. All his feelings, all his convictions, were in favour of a free trade in corn; he was satisfied that that system was, by far, the best; but looking at the various interests that had grown up under the Act of 1815—looking at the condition of some of the Southern and Western counties of England—considering their over-population and the mal-administration of the Poor-laws, reflecting, too, on the temper, and disposition of the people, he was not prepared to carry his principle fully into effect. He was aware of the extensive injury that must unavoidably be produced by a sudden change, and for that reason he wished it to be gradual. On the subject of importation, it was highly gratifying to remark that the quantity obtained from Ireland had of late years increased to an unprecedented extent. From the year 1815 to 1819, the average annual importation from thence was 150,000 quarters, while in the last year, ending 5th October, 1832, not less than 800,000 quarters had been admitted from Ireland. While contemplating the fitness of an alteration of the existing law, he felt bound to take into account the burthens exclusively pressing upon agriculture. He did not think that, upon any occasion, enough had been said on behalf of the landed proprietors of the heavy tax of statute labour on the roads; and looking at this and the other exclusive burthens, as he had before stated, he was not prepared to carry his own principle into effect in their fullest extent. He was aware that all changes were in themselves evils; and if a system were to be altered it ought to be altered as little as possible. The proposition of Mr. Ricardo, in 1822, was, that the following scale of fixed duties should be applied to the different kinds of grain:—Upon Wheat, a duty of 10*s.*; Rye 6*s.*; Barley 5*s.*; Oats 3*s.* 4*d.* He was disposed to recommend this plan to the adoption of the House; for he thought it would have the effect of removing a great deal of the evil which was felt under the existing system. He was aware that many persons thought that the maintenance of a high price by artificial means was of advantage to the agriculturist, but he entertained a very different opinion on this point. He considered that the agriculturist was injured rather than benefited by a system the working of which was a matter of total uncertainty, which defeated its own objects, and which tended to encourage a spirit of gambling. He felt confident that if the plan he proposed were carried into effect, the agriculturist would realize on the average nearly as great, if not quite as great, a price as he had obtained for his produce during the last five years. He would certainly not receive a less price than he had obtained within the last five years. He advocated a fixed duty instead of a varying one, but he meant a fixed duty only in ordinary times. He was not disposed to recommend that the duty should remain fixed in times of great scarcity, when the price of corn rose to a very high price. He thought that they ought to establish by law, that at a certain state of price the duty should cease altogether, and not leave it to the discretion of Government to permit by an Order in Council the importation of foreign corn free of duty. Having fixed the price at which the duty on foreign importation should cease, he knew of no way of ascertaining when corn had reached that price except by adopting the system of averages. He understood the meaning of that cheer, but he could assure those hon. Members from whom it proceeded that he objected to the principle of averages only when applied to a system that was ever varying. Connected with a steady system, he considered that the machinery of the averages would be productive of benefit. The Resolution, therefore, which he should have the honour to propose would not assert that a fixed duty should be maintained at all periods, but only in ordinary circumstances; and that in times of scarcity the duty should cease by the operation of the law. In his opinion, the effect of a free trade in corn would be to make the price in this country between 45*s.* and 47*s.* per quarter; and he believed that the imposition of a duty of 10*s.* would not raise the price to that extent, but that the increase would not exceed 7*s.* or 8*s.* per quarter. He was convinced that the only plan which would effectually prevent the visitation of famine was that which established a fixed duty on the importation of foreign corn. Under the present system the trade in corn was so uncertain that all ordinary calculations were baffled; and the consequence was, that little or no stock was kept on hand. In 1816 the quantity of corn in store in this country was equal to six months' consumption, but such had been the effect of the Corn-laws, that at the present moment the people had no supply to fall back upon; they were living, as it were, "from hand to mouth;" and should a time of scarcity arrive, the country would be in the greatest possible peril. The next point to which he should address himself was, the great advantage which the adoption of a fixed and moderate duty on corn would confer on the manufacturing interest of the country. During the last three or four years considerable importations of foreign corn had taken place, and the consequence was, that the exports of British manufactures had greatly increased. In looking to the amount of exports which had been made to Germany and Russia, he found the following result:—The annual average value of the exports to Germany from 1821 to 1824, when the corn trade was destroyed, amounted to 6,013,517*l.*; and from 1828 to 1830—a period in which considerable importation of foreign corn had taken place—it had increased to 8,153,731*l.* A similar result was observable with respect to the exports to Russia. The annual average value of the exports to that country from 1821 to 1824 amounted to 1,262,376*l.*, and from 1828 to 1830 to 2,122,619*l.* The necessary consequence of the increase in the exports of the country which would take place under a judicious system, allowing the importation of foreign corn, on the payment of a fixed and moderate duty would be to increase the wealth of the country—remove the present stagnation of trade—give a new vigour to British commerce, and materially tend to lighten the severe pressure under which the agriculturists themselves were now labouring. The hon. Member concluded by moving the following Resolution:—"That the present system of Corn-laws, founded on a high and ever-varying scale of duties, while it fails of conferring permanent benefit on the agricultural interest, tends to cramp the trade and impair the general prosperity of this country; that an alteration of these laws, substituting in their stead a moderate duty, fixed at all periods except those of extreme dearth, while it indemnified the agriculturists for the peculiar burthens which press upon them, would, by restoring the commercial relations between this kingdom and foreign countries, increase the manufactures, and render more equal the price of the produce of the country."

Mr. *Hume* rose, and commenced by observing, that, although he agreed in much that had fallen from his hon. friend who had brought forward this question, yet he was anxious to put it to the House in somewhat a different view. It was often said in that House, that the agricultural, the commercial, the manufacturing, the shipping, and all the other great interests, were equally entitled to the care and consideration of the Legislature. Now, the question he wished to ask the Members of that House was, whether they thought they were warranted in giving a monopoly to one interest against all others. Were they ready, as was so often professed, to place the manufacturing and commercial interests in the same position as the agricultural interest; or would they continue to give an advantage to the agricultural interest beyond what was enjoyed by other interests? It was frequently said, that the agricultural interest had exclusive burthens to bear, and was therefore entitled to peculiar protection. He had often heard this proposition stated, but what were the peculiar burthens borne by the agricultural interest? The only burthen mentioned by his hon. friend, which was peculiar to the agriculturists, was the highway rate. [Mr. *Whitmore* said, he had also mentioned Poor-rate—another hon. Member called out "tithes"!—a third "the Land-tax."] He denied that tithes were paid by the agriculturists exclusively, and as to Poor-rates, every kind of property contributed to the Poor-rates. [An *Hon. Member:* Does funded property contribute?] No, he did not say, that the funds contributed, but surely they did not call their own debts property, nor should it be said, that, because a man had owed a sum of money, he should contribute to the support of the poor. This, however, was foreign to the present question, though it was well deserving of consideration on some future occasion. What he now wished to confine himself to, was this simple question—were the Corn-laws fair to the manufacturing population? For four or five years past the average quantity of corn imported into this country was about 1,000,000 quarters each year. It was no matter whether the quantity was a little more or less. All he meant to prove by it was, that this country was regularly an importing country; or, in other words that it did not grow corn enough for the consumption of its population. If foreign corn was excluded, then, until the price at home rose to a certain amount, it was a monopoly to those growing corn, against those who consumed it, and were engaged in other kinds of industry. If there was no peculiar reason why this monopoly should be given to the corn growers, the law which gave it was clearly an unjust law, for it benefited one class, by injuring another. He admitted, freely and fully, that whatever exclusive burthens were borne by the landed interest should be removed; or else a protection should be given to them equal to the amount of those burthens. Much as had been said on this subject, he had never yet heard any one state how much was the amount of the exclusive burthens borne by the agriculturists, calculated on a quarter of corn; and, until that was done, he admitted they could not proceed to fix one particular rate of duty. Leaving out of the question on the present occasion all considerations connected with the rate of duty to which corn ought to be rendered liable, he would confine himself to an examination of the principle upon which that duty was at present imposed, and he was of opinion that it was impossible for the farmer ever to have justice done him, unless the prices of corn were better regulated in the market. They had always seen, that whatever the price of corn was, the landholders contended to have it maintained at that rate. When the price was 80*s*., they contended that they could not live if it were less, and now that it was 60*s*. they were afraid of any reduction of the duty, for fear of re-reduction in price. He certainly was of opinion that a fixed duty of a few shillings was all that was necessary to give ample security to the agricultural interest. As long as the present variable rates of duties were maintained, it was impossible that so regular a supply, or regular prices, could be maintained in the markets, as if the markets were left perfectly open; and, as a proof of that they had seen the price of corn varying from 70*s*. to 50*s*. within the short period of three months; and even varying 12*s*. in one month. It was impossible that any prudence, foresight, or experience could avail against such variation. Yet this was the result of the present system, which, as soon as the prices rose, admitted such an influx of corn as brought the markets immediately down, even below the former price. What was most wished for was, a steady price, and steady supply of corn, and he opposed the present varying scale on the ground that it did not afford a steady price or a regular supply. It was on these grounds that he (Mr. Hume) proposed in 1827, that a fixed duty should be laid on all corn imported. He at that time proposed that a fixed duty of 15*s*. should be laid on all wheat, which should be reduced to 10*s*. when it could have been ascertained whether that amount would be sufficient to meet the burthens of the country. He had afterwards proposed, instead of the varying scale of duties adopted in 1828, that a free trade in corn should be allowed, on payment of a fixed duty of 10*s*. per quarter on wheat. The division which ensued upon his Motion at that time gave him small hopes of ever attaining his object; but let him now call the attention of the House to some results which he had selected from the facts relative to the import of corn. The duty at the lowest which he proposed, was 10*s*. a quarter upon wheat; the importation of wheat since 1827 amounted to 4,795,000 quarters, upon which quantity a duty of only 6*s*. 8*d*. per quarter by the graduated scale, had been paid. Consequently if the 10*s*. duty had existed, the revenue would have benefited by the amount of 3*s*. 4*d*. more upon each imported quarter, that would prove a better protection to agriculturists, and he doubted whether it might not also be asserted that the price of bread would have been less. Besides which, it must be observed, that the market was always in danger of being glutted the moment the duty was reduced to so low an amount as to render it worth the importer's while to bring any considerable quantity into the ports. The duty which he at that time proposed on barley was 8*s*. yet the average amount realised by the varying system had only been 4*s*. 8*d*., and the duty which he had proposed on oats was 6*s*., while the amount realised had been 5*s*. 11*d*. From this it would be seen that instead of about 2,300,000*l*., the total amount of duties realised under the varying scale, the amount which would have been received under the fixed rate of duty proposed by him (supposing the same quantity of corn to have been imported) would have been 3,260,000*l*., so that not only had the public lost the advantage of a steady market by the rejection of his plan, but 1,000,000*l.* sterling had been lost to the Treasury. Nor was that all; the country had also lost the advantage of the improvements in commerce, and the increase of the manufactures, which would have taken place, and the landlords themselves had had to pay a large additional amount in poor-rates, which would not have been required if the country had been flourishing, work plentiful, and bread cheap. He would undertake to prove, that the present Corn-laws had been detrimental to the public, without being beneficial to the agricultural interest. He did not expect to hear it denied that every import must be paid for by an export. If so, every quarter of wheat imported put into employment some manufacturers to pay for that import. He wished the House to answer this question—"could the employment of hands in agriculture be now increased in agriculture?" He should say "very little," for there was a limit to the cultivation of land; but there was no limit to the increased employment of hands in manufactures, save a want of demand. Now, what produced a want of demand? A refusal to take from other countries the commodities which they produced. Fortunately for England, all her imports were raw materials. The cost of the raw material, generally speaking, was not more than nine, ten, or at the outside, twenty per cent of the finished article; all the rest was the profits of capital and wages laid out in this country. Every device, therefore, ought to be used to increase the manufactures of the country, which would thus relieve the agricultural parishes of the loads of unemployed poor with which they were at present filled. Whenever a stagnation took place in manufactures, the manufacturing labourers were flung back upon their parishes, and thus increased the amount of the Poor-rates. And thus it happened, that the agriculturists were directly interested in the success of the manufacturer, and that any check to the prosperity of the latter proved more injurious to the former than any monopoly of the Corn-laws was ever found to be beneficial. He did not expect to hear it disputed, that when wages were high, and the price of food dear, industry was proportionably checked. Therefore, if in England we had wages higher, and corn thirty per cent dearer than on the Continent, it followed that we were checking the activity and paralyzing the energy of our manufactures. The manufacturers of Belgium, France, Switzerland, and the United States, were all actively employed in manufacturing articles of every description, which came in competition with the same articles of our manufacture. Now, if he took the continent of South America as a common market, into which they all entered, it was clear that the buyer would not consider so much the cost at which the manufacture had been produced, as the quality of what he was going to buy. If we were obliged to feed our population thirty per cent dearer than the population of our rivals was fed, by paying 50*s.* a-quarter for corn which in Europe and America could be purchased for 30*s.* a-quarter, the consequence was clear, that the manufacturers of England were placed in a situation worse, by thirty per cent, in the expense of manufacturing than their Continental and Transatlantic brethren. Consequently the rate of profit which they would otherwise derive from their superior machinery, and their more easy supply of coal, was ground down by their meeting in the foreign market the manufacturers of cheaper corn countries. What, then, did he ask the House to do?—to place the workmen of England on the same footing as the workmen of other countries, and then he had no doubt that we should extend our commerce in every market in the world, and should supply them with better goods at as cheap, if not a cheaper rate, than any of our rivals. We should thus be able to employ a greater number of workmen in proportion to the greater consumption of the goods we manufactured. Would this hurt the agricultural interest? Quite the reverse. At the present moment the people of England were only three-quarters fed, and the result of this improvement in our manufacturers would be, that they would be fully fed. Thus, not only would all the corn now consumed be still consumed at a price equal to that now paid for it, but there would also be a demand for an additional supply, which could not fail to prove advantageous to the agricultural interest. He next called upon the House to consider what the operation of a free trade in corn would be upon foreign nations. Every country, knowing the rate of duty at which we suffered its importation, would calculate the expense at which they could transport it to England; and adding the expense of transport to the rate of duty, would thus calculate the expense at which they could supply our market. Our market would thus be free from fluctuation, owing to the constancy of the supply. Would the price of corn fall in this country in consequence? Certainly not. There was abundant proof that the opening of our ports always tended to raise the price of foreign corn to the price in the English market, and not to sink the price of British corn to the price in the continental market. This had been sufficiently proved by facts. In 1828 wheat at Dantzic was at 28*s.* a bushel; and at Hamburgh at 23*s.*; whilst in England the prices rose from 56*s.* to 76*s.* The consequence was, that the ports of England had been open to admit corn free of duty, and at Dantzic the prices rose in one week from 24*s.* to 50*s.* This was a practical proof that a free trade would not lower the prices in England, but would raise the price in other countries, and that the market of England would regulate the prices of corn throughout the world. In the winter of 1829 and 1830, wheat rose at Dantzic from 24*s.* to 36*s.* The price in England was at 51*s.*, but it rose till the duty fell to 1*s.*, and then the prices at Dantzic and Hamburgh rose in proportion as in the former case. In 1832 similar instances occurred. The consequence was, that agricultural distress was greatly increased, and that an able-bodied labourer could earn but 3*s.* 6*d.* a-week. He held in his hand a resolution recently passed by a parish in Norfolk, to the same effect as that in Hampshire, to which such pointed allusion was made last night. Was it not fit to try whether altering the system, which had produced such terrible results, would not lead to a better state of things? Worse there could not be; a better he believed there might be, by giving energy to the capital and skill of the country, by which alone could we flatter ourselves with the prospect of finding employment for that part of our population which was now unemployed. He was told, however, by the agriculturists that he ought to consider the difference in the amount of taxes paid by this country and by foreign countries, and that it was not fair to the farmers of England not to put upon foreign corn a tax equal to the difference between foreign taxation and our own. To this he would answer: "Would leaving your population unemployed enable them to pay that tax; or, indeed, any other tax; and if it would not enable them to pay taxes, would it not render the pressure of taxation still heavier upon that part of the community which would be compelled to meet it?" Let them take hardware, for instance. It was admitted that of the value of the exported article from fifty to sixty per cent had been paid in labour and in interest upon capital. The average was fifty per cent, although it sometimes rose to ninety. If 100*l.* worth of cutlery were exported, 50*l.* of the value had been spent upon labour, and 25*l.* of this was paid by the labourer for taxes on what he consumed. If, in return for this export, raw materials were imported to be manufactured for exportation, the same calculation was to be made, and thus 50*l.* was contributed towards the payment of the national debt. As often as the transaction was renewed, as often would the benefit accrue to the community. He said then, that by giving employment to the unemployed and starving labourers, you would give them the opportunity of paying more taxes, by consuming more taxable articles. He contended, that nothing was more opposed to all the principles contained in the speech of his hon. friend, the member for Wolverhampton, than his determination to stand by the present system of averages. Land in England would be of no greater value than it was in Poland, if it were not for the great extent of our manufacturing interests. It was, therefore, his opinion that we ought to throw open our ports to the whole world, to receive any articles which other countries might choose to send us. He was satisfied, that no means of relief would be effectual till we had freed our industry from the shackles by which it was now oppressed. He concluded by moving as an Amendment, "That all the words after the word 'that' in Mr. Whitmore's Motion be struck out, for the purpose of inserting the following:—'That it is the opinion of this House that any sort of corn, grain, meal, and flour, which is now imported into the United Kingdom, shall be admissible at all times on payment of a fixed duty.'" He had not named the amount of duty, as he was more anxious upon this occasion to establish the principle of his Resolution than to fix the rate of duty which would be fair to all parties.

Lord *Newark* maintained, that if the principles of the hon. member for Middlesex were to be established, the immediate effect would be to throw all the poor lands of the kingdom out of cultivation; nor was it certain that any foreign supply would be either regular or abundant, or that any advantage to be derived to the manufacturer would compensate for the mischief of throwing so large a portion of the agricultural poor out of employ. He should always be ready to defend the claims of the agriculturists, but at present he put the question before the House upon totally different grounds. Whence would the importation of corn be derived were the trade to be thrown open? Five years the importation amounted to 7,735,000 quarters, and of this 4,500,000 came from the ports in the northern part of Europe, 1,500,000 quarters came from Prussia, and 1,250,000 quarters from Russia, and from these two countries came one-third of the whole supply. The United States in 1829 sent but little, but in 1830 they sent about one-eighth, and in 1831 they sent one-fifth of the whole of the foreign supply. These were the countries on which it was proposed to place England in a state of absolute dependence for a supply of food. Russia, Prussia, and America! With the troops of Russia extending from the Baltic to the Bosphorus, and in possession of Constantinople, would the Ministers of England be better able to assume a higher attitude in dealing with her when this country was dependent on her for the food she ate? Would the Government of England be better able to induce Russia to be neutral in the affairs of Belgium? England had no corn country from which she could receive grain by way of tribute, and she would have to depend entirely on the jealous Powers of the North of Europe. What would there be to prevent Russia doing what she had done in the year 1801? There could be no greater fallacy than to argue that the greater the quantity of corn imported the greater was the export of British manufactures. The returns of exports and imports between Russia and England sufficiently disproved that assertion. In 1830, Russia exported one-third more corn than she had done in 1829, and yet the amount of exports from England to Russia was exactly the same. He had looked over the tables and papers before the House, and he could not find one instance in which the importation of corn had governed the exportation of manufactures. The very year that England had imported the largest quantity of corn from Russia was the very year that Russia had imported the least quantity of British manufactures. The hon. member for Middlesex had pointed out a number of facts to show, from the prices at Dantzic and at other places, that the prices abroad would rise in proportion to British importation, until the general prices of Europe would approach to a uniform level. If the experiment were to fail, he asked in what situation would the country be left? He maintained, that the country had been able to produce enough of food for home consumption with very little addition, and he should feel it his duty to oppose the Motion.

Mr. *Fergus O'Connor* said, that as the Representative of perhaps a larger agricultural constituency than any other Member of that House, he trusted he should stand excused for offering a few observations to the House. He maintained that the free introduction of corn into the kingdom would have the effect of throwing the agricultural labourers, not only of all Ireland, but he was persuaded of a great portion of England also, out of employment, and consequently into a state of the greatest distress; and before the country arrived at any such system, they must come to an equal adjustment of all property. By opening this question, they would throw all the peasantry upon the mercy of merciless landlords: and though popularity might induce him to advocate free trade in corn, yet he could not do so in justice to those who had returned him to that House. He held, that a system of free trade in corn would not be of any benefit to the manufacturing interest, either now or at any remote period, and he therefore implored the House not to be led away by the wild theory of political economists.

Mr. *Gilbert Heathcote* hoped the House would reject both the propositions which had been made; and he regretted that his hon. friend, the member for Wolverhampton, had brought forward his Motion at the present time, knowing, as he did, that many branches of our trade were in a flourishing state (especially the cotton trade); that the price of wheat was on the average 53*s.* per quarter, a price which was several shillings below that which was considered to be only a fair and remunerating price; and moreover that scarcely a single petition had been presented on the subject of the Corn-laws. Under all the circumstances, he thought his hon. friend might have postponed his Motion; and he regretted that he had not adopted this course upon the present occasion, because the plan he had followed was not likely to lead to any great public result, except the very objectionable one of a great loss of the time of that House. He thought they ought not to engage in speculative discussions or bring forward doubtful motions, but simply confine themselves to those by which the country might be benefited. And such decisions as those sought for by this Motion were attended with this evil, that they often brought into contact two parties who ought to be bound together by affectionate ties. He believed the tendency of this Motion would be, not to secure what his hon. friend had called "an equable price" for corn, but to lower the price of that article; and if a Bill were to be introduced upon these Resolutions, he should call it a Bill to lower the price of corn 20*s*. per quarter. Now he maintained, that the step towards securing an equable price was to secure permanency in the law. The business of a farmer in England was now more like that of a man gambling on the Stock Exchange; his situation was equally uncertain. He believed that a great change had taken place in the public mind as to a fixed duty on corn; and having attended a large agricultural meeting lately, he had found it unnecessary to argue this point, because the present system was there considered to be the best. All which the agriculturists wished was that they should be let alone. He conceived that the object of this Motion was actually to make a low duty when the price of corn was low. In that part of the county which he had the honour to represent there were seventeen thousand registered voters, who cultivated their own grounds, and who were small proprietors. Now, in respect to those persons, he would ask, what good would the lowering of rents do to those persons? He was sorry that in a personal canvass which he had made, prior to the late election, he had found these small proprietors to be in the greatest possible distress, and he was satisfied that reducing their rents would not benefit them, if the lawyer was to come to them and demand the interest on his mortgage. Now, what the hon. member for Middlesex called the monopoly of the land was, after all, only a fair protection which was afforded to it. Had the silk trade no protection? Had the cotton trade no protection extended to it? It was necessary that the agricultural interest should know without delay upon what system they were to continue; and he hoped that his Majesty's Ministers would at once speak out boldly as to what their future intentions were in reference to this most important topic.

Lord *Althorp* rose and said, it was a matter which could be doubted by no man, that this was a question of the greatest possible consequence to all classes, and one in which the feelings of the country, whenever it might be brought under the consideration of the House with a view to its settlement, must be strongly excited. It was impossible that they should not consider, in the first instance, the time at which the subject was brought forward, and the chance which there consequently existed of a settlement of the question. He would appeal to the consideration of the House whether, if the proposition either of his hon. friend behind him, or of the hon. Gentleman who had moved the Amendment, were carried on the present occasion, there would be any chance of the House coming to a satisfactory settlement of the question at the present moment? If he looked to the important interests which were now under the consideration of Parliament, and to the intense feeling which pervaded the country in reference to the questions which must come under their discussion, he would say, that, if ever there was a period in which it was unadviseable to enter upon a consideration of the Corn-laws, that was the time. Looking at the mere question of the time which remained for the public business yet to be done, he thought it would be found short enough without the addition of this question, which, under any circumstances, would make so large a demand on the attention of Parliament. Under these circumstances, he would ask, ought such a period to be chosen for re-opening a subject of such magnitude, and which must greatly excite the country from one end to the other? Besides, the price of corn was not now pressing. It was low, and the manufacturers were, on the whole, in a state of employment. When he objected to making any change in our system at this time, he must add, speaking his own private opinion, that he did not see any such great advantage which those laws produced to the landed interest. He hoped, that at any time he should not allow considerations of individual interest to sway in giving his opinion, even as a private person, on a subject of such magnitude, and still less should he do so in his character as a Minister of the Crown, whose duty it was, to take those measures which might best promote the interest of all classes ; but he might remark, that he did not see the Corn-laws had been of such advantage to the landed interest, that he, as a landed proprietor, would be greatly benefited by keeping them as they were. His great objection to any change now was, the unfitness of the time, and the pressure of so many other and more urgent subjects on the attention of Parliament. On these grounds it was his intention to have moved the "previous question" to the Resolution of the hon. member for Wolverhampton; but he was now precluded by the forms of the House from doing so, as an Amendment was already moved. He would, therefore, oppose the Amendment, with the view of meeting the original question afterwards with a negative. With these feelings of the unfitness of the time for the consideration of this great question, the House would see the propriety of his not following either of the hon. Members into the details into which they had gone. He might remark, however, with respect to fluctuations of prices, to which the hon. Member had referred, that it was impossible to prevent such fluctuations where the price of corn in this country was raised by factitious means above that of the Continent. He would also observe on what appeared to him to be a very general and a very erroneous opinion on the subject of prices as affected by the Corn-laws. It was believed by many, that the loss to the consumer in this country was equal to the whole amount of difference between the price which corn bore here, and that at which it was sold in the foreign market. Now this was not the case, for it was always remarked that the opening of our ports to the admission of foreign corn was immediately followed by a rise of prices in the foreign market, so as often to come very near to our own price. He would again add, that this was not the time for agitating the question.

Mr. *Baring* said, it was fit the country should know, that the noble Lord's sole objection to this question being settled was one purely of time, and that he considered the Corn-laws to be in such a state that nothing could be worse. Now, he (Mr. Baring) had been accused of inconsistency in making long speeches one way and voting another, but what degree of inconsistency was this to a Minister of the Crown who came down to that House and objected to a discussion upon the Corn-laws, while he admitted that those laws were so bad that nothing could be worse?

Lord *Althorp* rose to explain. He had not said, that the Corn-laws were so bad that nothing could be worse, but he had merely expressed doubts whether they operated so advantageously for the agriculturists as was generally supposed.

Mr. *Baring* begged pardon of the noble Lord, if he had pushed his construction of the noble Lord's words too far, but the impression caused by them must be, that he was unfavourable to the protecting duties. If then the noble Lord thought the Corn-laws injurious to the prosperity of the country, what time ought to be suffered to stand in the way of a removal of the evil? Had they sat in that House debating for three months and done nothing? If the noble Lord thought the Corn-laws injurious to the country, there could be no time at which they ought not to be taken into consideration. The noble Lord was not aware of the effect which might be produced upon all the great interests of the country by his remarks, when so much uncertainty existed upon this important question. The state of the Bank of England, the East India Charter—these questions had never been brought before the House; and he need hardly state to them that it would be the duty of a vigilant Government to bring forward some of these great quesions on which the industry of the country depended. The impression produced by the noble Lord's speech was, that he was friendly to some alteration in the Corn-laws. Nothing could tend so much to keep all persons in the dark as to how they should keep their engagements as what had fallen from the noble Lord. The hon. Gentleman then adverted to the evidence of a Mr. Webb, of Salisbury, with a view to show the value of land. Mr. Webb, it appeared, was a valuer of land, and on the question being put to him as to what was the average value of land, his reply was, that it was worth twenty-six or twenty-seven years' purchase. He was then asked, what had been the value of land at the period the Stocks were down to seventy, and it appeared that at that period land was worth thirty-two years' purchase. This gentleman attributed the difference as to the value of land to the uncertainty which prevailed as to what would be done in respect to the Corn-laws. He thought the public would have liked better to have heard that the noble Lord had taken some decided step upon this subject rather than hear that he had made the speech he had just uttered. He acknowledged that he felt most strongly the injury done to the country. The question of the protecting duties on corn he considered to be one of degree, and when he had met his constituents he had acquainted them that he would maintain the Corn-laws as they existed. He should like to know what great injury any Gentleman of that House had ever known or experienced from the operation of the present Corn-laws? As far as his inquiries went he was happy to say, that though distress might prevail in some places, still, upon the whole, the manufacturing districts were in as prosperous a condition as they had been for many years. The contrary was the case as regarded agriculture. The distress in this respect exceeded even what they expected. What necessity was there then to alter the law when the distress was with the agriculturists, and the prosperity with the manufacturers? The noble Lord seemed to think, that the agriculturists were not much benefited by the present protection. Were they, then, to be led away by the opinions of political economists, who themselves did not understand the theories they propounded? The price of corn at present and the rate of rents were very little above what they were before the war. They had it in evidence before the Committee, that in one county one-third or one-fourth of the lands had gone out of cultivation, no doubt from inadequate remuneration. If the present law had produced great fluctuation, or too high a price, that might be some ground for altering it. But such was not the case. It was admitted, on the contrary, that steadiness of price had been the result. The noble Lord (Lord Althorp) said, fluctuation was inseparable from an artificial price of corn. This he must deny. During the five years this law had been in force the price here was more steady than on the Continent. During that period the price stood at about 60*s*., sometimes a little more, sometimes less. There was no period of history in which it would not be found that the price of corn was liable to fluctuation. During these five years the price at Havre and on the Seine was at an average of 80*s*. This proved, that the present system had not worked so ill. The principle laid down by the hon. member for Middlesex was one of pure political economy. He went along with him to a certain degree, but there were disturbing causes which sometimes rendered it necessary to depart from these principles. It was the business of a wise Government to render a country as much as possible independent of foreign supply, otherwise it might happen here, as it sometimes did in the East Indies, that thousands might die for want of food. There was no reason to entertain the Motion, but there was great reason why the country should not be disturbed from one end to the other by the language of the noble Lord. What was the state of the great manufactures of this country? In the corn trade, the cotton, the pottery, or any other great branch, was there any prospect of dangerous competition? No; they had advantages in this respect which no other country enjoyed, and there was not the least ground for altering the Corn-laws. He should like to know from the Vice-President of the Board of Trade, whether France manifested any disposition to take these manufactures. He believed not. If the ports of France were opened to-morrow, France would not take our manufactures. These difficulties arose from the fiscal regulation of the other Continental nations. Holland was the only country with which England had a perfectly free trade. The noble Lord (Lord Althorp) said, that if we opened our ports, the price of corn in England would not fall, but the price of corn in foreign countries would rise. This would be the case if there was a great want of corn; but if there was an abundance of corn of home growth, the price must necessarily fall to the Continental price. It was admitted on all hands, that some protection was necessary, to the amount at least of the greater pressure of charge upon English agriculturists above those of the Continent. The two richest countries Europe could boast of were those in which corn was protected: he meant England and France. Those countries in which there was no protection were the most miserable in Europe. He hoped the House would listen to no such proposition as that now submitted to them; and he regretted, that the manner in which the noble Lord expressed himself was such as, he feared, would produce a most unfortunate impression throughout the country.

Viscount *Palmerston* said, he should not have risen were it not for the manner in which what had fallen from his noble friend (Lord Althorp) had been misrepresented by the hon. member for Essex (Mr. Baring). The hon. Member had before now observed, in reference to himself, that his own speeches and votes occasionally disagreed in tenor, and, probably, on the present occasion, the hon. Member was too much engaged in keeping hold of his own ideas, with a view to reconcile them to his vote, to attend sufficiently to the sentiments expressed by his noble friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. His noble friend did not say (as the hon. Member appeared to suppose) that it was the intention of Ministers in a future Session to make a complete alteration in the Corn-laws; on the contrary, his noble friend carefully guarded against stating the intentions of Government one way or the other. The hon. Gentleman represented his noble friend as having said, that he considered the present law as injurious to the agricultural interest. [Mr. *Baring* said, he had explained that.] The hon. Gentleman did explain it, but then he repeated the same charge frequently after in the course of his speech. What his noble friend said was, that he did not consider the present law so beneficial to the agriculturists as it was generally supposed by themselves to be; and that was also his opinion. From the expression of this opinion no conclusion could be drawn as to what his noble friend or himself might be prepared to do hereafter. He could not see the force of the hon. Member's argument, that it was politically dangerous for a country to depend on other States for a portion of its supply of food. Every manufacturing country which exported its manufactures must be dependent on other countries for food, because if the manufacturers could not sell their commodities in the foreign market, they could not buy the means of subsistence either at home or abroad. He entirely concurred with his noble friend, that in the present time and circumstances it was inexpedient to agitate this important question; but surely his noble friend's objecting to entertain the subject could not be fairly said to throw the agricultural interest into doubt and uncertainty. He regretted that the subject had been brought forward; but having entered upon its consideration, he thought that the House had better dispose of it in the manner recommended by his noble friend, by negativing the Amendment, in order to afford his noble friend an opportunity of meeting the original Resolution by the previous question.

Colonel *Wood* said, the present law in general gave satisfaction to the agricultural interest, because it did procure steadiness of price. If Ministers were more explicit upon the subject, they would have acted more to the satisfaction of the agriculturists. He thought that something more decided should be done upon this question by the Ministers. He never would argue it as one solely in which the agricultural interest was concerned, but as one in which all great interests were alike concerned. The hon. member for Middlesex seemed disposed to impose a duty on corn for the sake of revenue, but not of protection. He should have thought corn would be the very last article selected for such a purpose. This was the object of the law of 1815. Lord Dacre and others then refused to act upon this principle, but expressed their readiness to grant protection up to the point of a remunerating price. The protection of agriculture by duties existed above 150 years. He would not go further back than 1670. The price then was 53*s*. 4*d*., and the import duty was 16*s*. 7*d*. The degree of protection was not greater now than the change of time required. This law existed for ninety-five years, without being repealed, or even without discussion, up to 1791. He regretted the subject was brought on, and hoped there would be so decided a majority as would prevent it from being brought forward again. No fixed duty could be maintained without leading to such fluctuations as must be ruinous to the agriculturists.

Mr. *Cutlar Fergusson* hoped Ministers would propose no change in the law with which the agriculturists themselves were content. He trusted the House would never entertain any proposition similar to the present. It would lead to the greatest confusion, and to the ruin of the agricultural interest. The result of the regulation proposed by the hon. member for Middlesex would be to prevent free trade in corn until such time as the country was on the point of starvation. The language of the hon. Member was very different on the hustings and in that House. On the hustings his language was, "Vote against the Corn-laws, and let us have cheap bread." In the House he said to the agriculturists, "You cannot be injured by letting in foreign corn. The price is sure to rise to the prices on the Continent, and rents must also rise." The present Corn-laws he considered better than any other system he had yet heard of; infinitely better than any scheme he had heard proposed that night as a substitute.

Mr. *Robinson* would tell Ministers, that they were labouring under a great fallacy if they supposed the present system of Corn-laws would remain without the fullest discussion, at the proper time, by the Parliament, as then constituted. He perfectly agreed with the noble Lord (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) that it was not at all judicious to press the subject at the present time, when so many other important matters were waiting their decision. What he principally rose for was, to protest against the assertion that the decision of that night would be taken as a final one by the country; for next Session the subject must again come before them, when he felt satisfied there would be no difficulty in showing, that the present system of Corn-laws had completely failed to answer the purpose for which they were enacted.

Mr. *Cayley* denied the assertion, that the Corn-laws had not answered the expectations of the agriculturists. Did the noble Lord (Althorp) imagine, that the agriculturists expected a high rate of duty with a high price? They expected a low rate of duty with a high price of corn, and a high rate of duty with a low price of corn; and, in that principle, both growers and consumers received ample protection. The hon. mover could not deny that we had had a very steady price even under deficient harvests: he merely maintained, that if certain circumstances had occurred which he contemplated, there would not have been that steadiness of price. He was prepared to show, that we should always have less fluctuation under a graduated scale of duties than under a fixed duty. Let them look back at what had happened since the present Corn-law came into operation. The first four harvests were deficient—the price rose—the duty fell—the consumer was protected—and the fluctuation was not greater than from about 58*s.* to 66*s.* per quarter for wheat; then came 1832, a more abundant harvest—prices fell—and the duties were high, and the grower was protected. Our currency did not allow of a higher price in this country, in average seasons, than from 45*s.* to 52*s.* per quarter; and if we had average seasons for four years successively, we should have a steady low rate of prices as we had previously had a high rate. It was a mistake to suppose that the Corn-laws had a tendency to raise the price of corn beyond its ordinary price in average seasons; their operation was mainly to prevent prices falling below this ordinary price by means of an importation of foreign corn; and with a deficient harvest they tended to protect the home-grower against the foreign grower, who might have suffered under no such casualty, until the price rises so high that it becomes necessary to protect the consumer. There was no greater fallacy than that of assuming, because the average duty on the import of corn since the present Corn-law came into operation had been only 6*s.* 8*d.*, that this is the sole protection it affords to the farmer. They had but to carry that principle to its extreme—to suppose the scarcity to have been such that 1*s.* duty had been levied, to discover its absurdity; for, then, according to this doctrine, the protection would only have been 1*s.* to the grower. The real protection which the law afforded, was when the price fell to 50*s.* That was the time when the farmer wanted protection, not when the price was high without it. The agriculturists had often been deluded; but their folly would be extreme if they gave in to the miserable fallacy, that a fixed duty of 10*s.* or 15*s.* would protect them better than the present law. The present duty protected the grower under a low price, and a fixed duty of 10*s.* or 15*s.* would protect him under neither a high nor a low price. Under a high price it would be taken off by an Order in Council; under a low price it would merely add so much to the 25*s.* or 30*s.* or 35*s.*, at which foreign corn could be sold in this country free of duty. He could conceive no principle better than that of the present law; but he saw no necessity for being irrevocably bound to the whole of its machinery; and one or two alterations would improve its working. He would not, however, say more than merely to add, that if this question was to be revived and discussed, it could not be done at a more improper season than when a Committee had been appointed upon the distresses of British agriculture.

Mr. *Benett* considered, that the present Corn Bill had worked well for all classes in the country for the last five years. He, therefore, was opposed to any alteration of it. So important and numerous a class as the agricultural labourers ought to be the object of the particular protection of the Legislature.

Mr. *O'Connell* thought the people of this country ought to have food as cheap as possible, and the meaning of the word "protection" was dear food. There was no virtue in a Reformed Parliament if it did not give the people cheap food. He was groaned at for advocating cheap provisions for the people. If any one would come forward to remove all taxes from the articles of subsistence he would give them his support. But it might be said he was speaking against the interest of the people of Ireland, who had a monopoly of the supply of this country with corn. The fact was, however, that the people of Ireland did not get one ounce of the corn grown in their country. They did not eat bread—they scarcely got potatoes; and all the benefit of the monopoly went into the pockets of the absentees. His only objection to the Motion was, that it did not go far enough. The people well knew, that protection meant dear food; and how would their decision this night go forth to the world? It would be said, that the gentry of the country, the men of fortune, Members of that House, having power to make laws, made them for their own advantage and protection, for the oppression of the poor, who needed legislative protection, and in order to raise their own incomes by impoverishing and starving the people [*Loud cries of "No, no," and cheers, in which some one in the Gallery joined*].

Mr. *Dundas*, who was in the side Gallery, rose, and, addressing the Chair, said, "Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to state, that there is a stranger in the Gallery joining in the cheers of the House."—[A pause ensued, and the supposed stranger deliberately put on his hat, a privilege allowed only to Members.] He then rose and addressed the House; but was unable to obtain a hearing amidst the confusion. This Gentleman was Mr. Lalor, member for the Queen's County, Ireland, who was seated in the Strangers' Gallery conversing with a friend.

Mr. *Frankland Lewis* moved, that the Gallery be cleared.

Strangers were excluded.

Mr. *Lalor* stated, from the place he occupied in the Gallery, that he was the only person who cheered in the Gallery. It was a mistake to suppose that any stranger had cheered, at least so far as he had observed.

Mr. *Frankland Lewis* disclaimed any wish to interfere with any hon. Member's privilege, and said, that he had acted under the impression that there had been a violation of the privileges of the House, and the freedom of the debate.

The *Speaker* said, that as the supposed violation of order had been explained, there was no occasion, he presumed, to proceed any further in the business. Undoubtedly if any stranger had been guilty of using any expression of approbation or disapprobation, or of noticing, in any manner, the observations of Members, it would have been a high breach of privilege, which it would have been the duty of the House to visit with some mark of its displeasure. The hon. Member had done perfectly right in calling the attention of the House to the supposed violation of its privileges.

Strangers were then re-admitted.

Mr. *O'Connell* then proceeded. That which he had sought to impress upon the House was, that they would be placing themselves in a very unenviable and, he might add, dangerous contrast between their regard for their own interests and the interests of the people if they rejected the present Motion. The people would be reminded of this contrast as many times in the day as they took food, and no sophistry would be able to get rid of the impression their conduct would make upon the minds of the people. ["*Oh, oh.*"] There was no argument in those cries. An attempt to cry down his advocacy of the wants of the people was only adding insult to injury. It was his wish to get corn in this country as low in price as it was in the cheapest countries in Europe. He knew, that to do so would be the course of humanity; he thought it would be the course of justice; and he hoped some one would come into that House and sweep away those Corn-laws altogether.

Colonel *Conolly* said, it was his fate always to follow the hon. and learned member for Dublin, whole ingenious perversion of facts and the sentiments of the people of Ireland seemed to him to require a corrective. As an Irish landlord he hoped the House would not concur with that hon. and learned Gentleman in thinking, that he could not feel for the interest of the people as well as his own. If the House meant to maintain faith with the public creditor, it must do so with the agricultural interest. This was the opinion of much higher authorities than he could pretend to be. If the manufacturing interest expected relief by spoliation of the landed interest, never had they been more misled by any of the many silly and shallow projects that had been submitted to that House.

Mr. *Grantley Berkeley* was as anxious to see the people have cheap food as the hon. and learned member for Dublin, but he did not see how it was possible to give the people cheap food, or more of it, by depriving them of all the money they now earned. He knew that the class of liberal tradesmen were not so much against the Corn-laws as was pretended. He knew a Gentleman who employed 3,000 men daily in the iron-works, and it was the opinion of that Gentleman, that if the Corn-laws were repealed the depression of agriculturists would communicate itself to them. He should oppose the Motion.

Mr. *Henry Handley* regretted the question had been brought forward at present, and also the temporising speech made by the noble Lord. He thought there was too much legislation already upon this subject. It would be better to let the parties settle things more amongst themselves.

Sir *Francis Burdett* spoke amidst frequent interruptions. He thought the question would be better disposed of by a Committee up-stairs, and that it could not be satisfactorily dealt with by the House. He was for a free trade in corn and all other commodities. He would have voted for the original Motion had no other been proposed; but as the Amendment of the hon. member for Middlesex went further, he should vote for that.

Mr. *Hume* begged leave to withdraw his Amendment. He thought the sense of the House might be taken upon the first Resolution.

Lord *Althorp* said that, as the Amendment had been withdrawn, he should propose as an amendment the previous question.

The House divided on the question that the question be then put—Ayes 106; Noes 305; Majority 199.

List of the AYES.

ENGLAND.

Aglionby, H. A.
Baillie, J. E.
Bainbridge, E.
Barnett, C. J.
Bish, T.
Bolling, W.
Briggs, R.
Brotherton, J.
Buckingham, J. S.
Buller, E.
Bulwer, H. L.
Burdett, Sir F.
Clay, W.
Dashwood, G. H.
Davenport, J.
Dawson, E.
Divett, E.
Evans, De Lacy
Ellis, W.
Etwall, R.
Evans, W.
Ewart, W.
Feilden, W.
Fenton, L.
Ferguson, Sir R.
Fielden, J.
Fryer, R. C.
Gaskell, D.
Godson, R.
Grey, Sir G.
Grote, G.
Guest, J. J.
Gully, J.
Hardy, J.
Hawes, B.
Hornby, E. G.
Hughes, H.
Hume, J.
Humphery, J.
Hutt, W.
Hyett, W. H.
Ingham, R.
Jervis, J.
Key, Sir J.
Langton, G.
Lester, B. L.
Lister, C.
Marshall, J.
Marsland, T.
Martin, J.
Milton, Viscount
Molesworth, Sir W.
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrison, J.
Ord, W. H.
Parker, J.
Philips, M.
Philpotts, J.
Potter, R.
Ramsbottom, J.
Ricardo, D.
Rippon, C.
Robinson, G. R.
Romilly, J.
Romilly, E.
Ryle, J.
Sheppard, T.
Stewart, P.
Strickland, G.
Strutt, E.
Thompson, Alderman
Tancred, H. W.
Tennyson, C.
Thicknesse, R.
Torrens, Colonel R.
Turner, W.
Vernon, Hon. G. J.
Williams, G.
Wood, G.
Wood, M.
Walker, R.
Walter, J.
Warburton, H.
Whitmore, W.
Whalley, Sir S.
Young, G. F.

SCOTLAND.

Dunlop, Captain J.
Ewing, J.
Ferguson, R.
Gillon, W. D.
Maxwell, Sir J.
Oliphant, L.
Oswald, R. A.
Oswald, J.
Parnell, Sir H.
Ross, H.
Stewart, R.
Wemyss, Captain

IRELAND.

Evans, G.
Lalor, P.
O'Connell, D.
O'Connell, Morgan
O'Connell, Charles

harmony with the feelings of the majority of the nation: but who was audacious enough to assert that the Church of England promoted the interest, or was in harmony with the feelings, of the people at large? Was it possible that under such circumstances there could be any peace in that country, or that the people there could be contented? It had been said, that the coercive measure was necessary in order to enforce a due obedience to the laws; but his answer was, that laws should be just and equal before any measures were taken to enforce obedience to them. Were the Ministers ignorant of the rights of their fellow-men; or had they determined to refuse those rights? He feared that the latter was the case. He warned them to beware in time. He told them that they must diminish the monopolies and the privileges of the aristocracy. It was for their benefit that all these abuses had hitherto been kept up. How was it that the younger branches of the Aristocracy had escaped from suffering the evil effects of the primogeniture system which, after all, was the great source of our miseries? How, but by being quartered upon the people? Was it to be expected that the aristocracy would willingly give up such advantages? The experience of the two last years was a sufficient answer to the question. The hon. member for St. Andrew's had said on a former occasion that Christianity depended upon the support of the establishment. He denied that such was the fact. Indeed, he believed that the continuance of an establishment where it was in opposition to the wishes of the people was more likely to be injurious than beneficial to the cause of Christianity. What right had the Church of England to assume to itself any superiority over any other form of Christianity? It certainly had no warrant from Scripture; quite the contrary; nor from prescription: in fact, it had no authority, save that of an Act of Parliament. In his opinion the property of the Church was national property, and every proposition which tended to deprive the nation of the benefit of that property was a fraud upon the people. He knew that his opinion in this respect was not in unison with that of other Members of the House, but he should enjoy the consolation of having done his duty in resisting the proposition for keeping up the present enormous establishment in Ireland.

Lord *Althorp* was glad to hear the hon. Member admit that his opinions were not in unison with those of others on this point—an admission which he (Lord Althorp) believed to be very well warranted by the fact. With respect to the proposition of the hon. Member opposite, he felt that he should not be doing that which was necessary for the advantage of public business, or for the benefit of the House, if he entered into a lengthened argument to prove that a Church Establishment was desirable. He should only observe, that he thought it desirable for the advantage of religion. The hon. Member seemed to assume that all which he did not approve of must necessarily be detrimental. Surely, before he came to such a sweeping conclusion, he might have considered that it was possible he could be mistaken. He should say no more than that he could not possibly consent to the Amendment.

Colonel *Evans* said, that he did not think the measure would answer the public expectation even in England, and most certainly it would not in Ireland. He regretted that the Bill did not go much further.

Mr. *Finn* said, that the only part of the Bill that would give satisfaction in Ireland was that which related to the Vestry-cess.

Mr. *Robinson* denied the assumption of the hon. Member who had seconded the Amendment, that the Dissenters in England wanted an appropriation of the Church property to purposes called purposes of public utility. He knew many Dissenters in this country who considered a Church Establishment to be extremely beneficial, and as necessary to the maintenance of the Protestant religion itself.

Mr. *Sinclair* had taken the liberty, on a former occasion, when his hon. friend (Mr. Gillon) presented a petition containing sentiments similar to those which he had now expressed, to state his own conviction, that these were not the opinions entertained by the great majority of the people of Scotland. Their deliberate conviction he apprehended to be this: that a national establishment, or, in other words, a national recognition of our dependence on God, is a national privilege and a national blessing. They not only appreciated the advantages which they themselves enjoyed under the fostering care of their own Established Church, but they recognized the services, and desired the permanence, of the Sister Establishment in

England. Many of the Dissenters in Scotland, though not conforming to the Presbyterian establishment, would admit the necessity of upholding a National Church in every Christian country. Roman Catholics, for instance, and Episcopalians, might be considered as concurring in this view; and he himself had heard seceding Ministers in Scotland, not only acknowledge, in private, the excellence of the Established Church, but pray in public for its stability, as well as for its reformation. A public provision for inculcating the doctrines of the Gospel was the more indispensable, because the willingness of individuals to contribute voluntarily towards the dissemination of religious knowledge was generally in an inverse ratio to their need of it. He could not, on this occasion, help quoting the high authority of Dr. Chalmers, an individual whose illustrious name would occupy a prominent place in the annals of his country—one who combined the highest powers of intellect with the most expansive benevolence of the heart—one upon whose knowledge he could pass no higher encomium, than to say that it was as profound as his humility—one who enforced the sublime mysteries of the Gospel with an eloquence only comparable to the sincerity with which he believed them in his heart, and to the consistency with which he exemplified them in the daily habits of his life. This distinguished man not only advocated the permanence as well as promoted the welfare of that Church which numbered him amongst her most valued and devoted sons, but had stood forward as the champion of the Anglo-Irish Episcopal Church, which he considered as one of the best bulwarks of the Protestant faith. If the machinery was less useful than it ought to be, the fault lay only with those who had neglected to employ it in a manner best calculated to promote its efficiency. He was most anxious for the stability of the Established Church in both countries, and for a salutary reformation of all acknowledged abuses, as the best means of promoting that object; and without pledging himself to vote for all the details of this measure, his support of its principle would be as decided as his opposition to the Motion of his hon. friend.

Mr. *Roebuck* thought, that in a discussion of this sort, which ought properly to be confined to the advantages or evils of the English Church Establishment in Ireland, it was hardly fair to mix up the question of the English Establishment in this country. Here the majority of the people were in favour of the Establishment, and the majority of the people were entitled to have what they wished—there they were opposed to the Establishment, and he must say, considering that fact, that the noble Lord had not done for them what justice and necessity required.

The House divided on the Amendment: Ayes 16; Noes 126—Majority 110.

List of the AYES.

ENGLAND.

Brocklehurst, J.
Fielden, J.
Leech, J.
Molesworth, Sir W.
Parrot, Jasper
Roebuck, J.

SCOTLAND.

Maxwell, Sir J.
Oswald, R.

IRELAND.

Barron, W.
Finn, W.
Fitzgerald, T.
Fitzsimon, C.
Lynch, A.
O'Connor, Fergus
Roche, D.
Ronayne, D.

TELLERS.

Gillon, W. D.
Rippon, C.

The House resolved itself into a Committee.

On the second Clause (empowering the Lord-lieutenant to appoint Ecclesiastical Commissioners,) being read,

Sir *Robert Inglis* objected to the constitution of the commission, inasmuch as it was different from that established at the Act of Union. The Act of Union provided, that the Church Government of the United Church of England and Ireland should be the same; and would any man tell him, that if such a board as that proposed was constituted, that it would leave the Irish branch of the Church inviolate? On a former occasion he stated his objections to this tribunal, and he would state, without fear of contradiction, that never, except in the worst portions of our history, was a precedent to be found for the formation of such a Board. It was not contended that the hierarchy of Ireland were deficient or wanting in due attention to the interests of the Church. This insult was therefore perpetrated upon them without a shadow of reason. He objected strongly to the affairs of the Church being placed in the hands of a Board, the majority of whom were laymen, and one of whom must not of necessity be a Protestant of the Established Church. He would ask, whether the Lord Chancellor of Ireland must of necessity be a Protestant of the Established Church.—He most certainly need not be so, and yet he had a seat at the new Board. This insult was offered at a period when the Irish bench presented as much of talent, zeal, and piety, as had ever done honour to the Christian Church. On the whole, he objected to the clause, as impolitic and dangerous to the Church, and as injurious to the hierarchy; he objected to it because it usurped their functions, and placed the functions of the Crown in the hands of irresponsible persons.

Lord *Althorp* said, that the clause was not open to the objections stated by the hon. Baronet. As to a majority of the Commissioners being laymen, he intended to propose an alteration in the seventh clause of the Bill, which would meet that objection. He intended to insert a provision to the effect that the common seal of the Commissioners should not be affixed to any order, so as to render their acts valid, unless with the consent of at least one of the ecclesiastical Commissioners. He denied that the clause either was, or was meant to be an insult to the hierachy of Ireland. He would remind the hon. Baronet, that the Commissioners for building churches in England had power to refuse to assist in building any churches they pleased.

Mr. *Goulbourn* said, that it appeared to him that the noble Lord the Chancellor of the Exchequer had diverged from the question immediately under consideration. He should confine himself to referring very shortly to one or two topics, endeavouring to set the House right in point of argument and reasoning with reference to the appointment of the Commission. The noble Lord stated, that in England the Commissioners for building churches had power to refuse building any particular church, and the noble Lord seemed to assign that as a reason why the Commissioners to be appointed in Ireland should possess a similar power. But he was sure the Committee could not fail to perceive, that there was a most important distinction between the two cases. There the money for building churches was to be taken from the revenues of the Church itself and it surely ought on every principle of justice and equity to be applied to the furtherance of the objects sought to be obtained by the Establishment. If the noble Lord intrusted to lay Commissioners the power of refusing to apply the funds of the Church to that which was the great object of such an Establishment—the propagation of the Protestant religion—if the noble Lord gave them the power of refusing to apply the funds of the Church to the erection of places of worship in parishes where they did not at present exist—he would give them a power very different indeed from that possessed by the Commissioners for building churches in England, who were merely the trustees appointed by Parliament for distributing the revenue placed at their disposal, and not of a fund arising from Church-property. When the expense of building a church was to fall upon the Church itself, there could be no possible objection on the part of the people of any district to have a church erected, and it could only be from party feeling in those who might think it inexpedient to promote the interests of the Protestant religion, or from a worse motive in others who manifest an utter indifference to the promulgation of its doctrines—it could only be from one or other of these reasons that any set of men could object to there being in every parish in Ireland a Protestant church and a Protestant minister. This he could undertake to say from his own personal knowledge, that in many cases in which new churches had been built in Ireland, in which ministers had been placed who were zealous men and anxious to discharge their duty and advance the interests of the Protestant religion, these churches had afterwards been discovered to be too small, and he never knew any case in which such a church so conducted had failed to have a sufficient congregation. He could show the noble Lord many instances in which not only was there a sufficient congregation, but in which the extent of it had so far exceeded the expectations of those under whose auspices the church was erected, that notwithstanding it was at first considered that a church would be unnecessary at all, it had been found afterwards necessary to increase its size. He stated these facts from his own experience, and knowing from his own observation how the fact really stood, he felt the greatest anxiety when he came to that part of the Bill which relates to the building of churches, that the House should understand how much they would impede the advancement of the Protestant religion by throwing any obstacles in the way of erecting churches. Having said thus much on this point, he would proceed to the very important subject under consideration. He entered very fully into the objections which had been so ably stated by his hon. friend the member for Oxford (Sir R. Inglis), and he confessed he could discover no possible reason why the great change, the extensive departure from all former practice and established usage should be effected by the Bill under the consideration of the Committee. There had been, up to the present period, a Board partly ecclesiastical and partly lay, for the management of the First Fruit fund in Ireland. The duties of that Board, however, were extremely limited—they were limited to the application of the funds voted by Parliament for the building of churches; but even that Board so constituted and possessing such limited powers, derived its authority from the Church. The Parliament of the day in constituting that Board felt it incumbent to give the greatest share of influence to the ecclesiastical portion of the Board, thinking that the higher order of the Church of Ireland were the individuals best qualified to judge of the wants and feelings of the people as connected with religious instruction. The duties that devolved upon the Commissioners, however, were not limited to this narrow sphere, but were extended to other objects far more important—far more novel—and such, in fact, as were unfit to be extended to a board constituted as that proposed by the Bill must naturally be. The House was bound to take the most particular care that powers so extensive as these, with which the Board were to be intrusted, should not be given to commissioners, the majority of whom being laymen had not, and were not, likely to have the same interest on the subject as ecclesiastical commissioners. In the first place these commissioners were to have the power of imposing taxation to any amount on the several Archbishops, and other clergy. These commissioners had next the power of remunerating curates in particular parishes—they therefore were to possess the power of deciding whether these curates were necessary or not. The question was one of a purely ecclesiastical nature. But these commissioners were to have the power of issuing sequestration against the incomes of the different incumbents in case certain regular annual payments were not made out of incomes which had perhaps never been received. They were to have the power, in case a fixed payment was not made on a specific day, of coming down with the whole power of the crown on persons holding benefices. It would be no answer for an individual against whom the power was to be exercised, to say, "I have been unable to collect my tithes—I have been for twelve months, in my present benefice without receiving a single shilling." No; the commissioners would have the power of claiming their whole demand, although the incumbent might not have received, and might not expect to receive, one single shilling of his annual revenue. If these enormous powers were necessary at all, he would say let them at least be exercised by those who had some fellow-feeling with the clergy, and who would exercise them with a greater knowledge of the peculiar circumstances in which they might be placed than the laity could possibly possess. He would next proceed to another point to which he had before slightly adverted—he meant the power which this commission was to possess of deciding whether a minister of the Church of England was or was not to be appointed to certain parishes in which for some given time past, there had been a default of residence. Again he would say, that it was a power which if any necessity existed for its being exercised at all, should be only exercised by the highest officers of the Church, by those who would be bound by every moral and religious obligation to look to the advancement of the spiritual concerns of the people, and who in no case short of actual necessity—if indeed the necessity of such a proceeding in any case could possibly be supposed to exist—would give their sanction to the suspension of the performance of the rites of the Protestant religion by a Protestant minister in any Church. These commissioners were also to have the power of uniting and disposing of parishes without the consent of the Archbishops. They were to have the entire power of remodelling parishes—and of doing other acts which might materially affect the arrangement of parishes in Ireland. In short when he looked to the whole of the powers confided to them, he saw in them so much of a distinctly ecclesiastical nature—so much influence in spiritual concerns—that he could not reconcile it to his ideas of propriety, that commissioners, a majority of whom were to be laymen, should exercise an authority which heretofore had been possessed exclusively by the Bishops and Archbishops of Ireland. It was not merely by possessing a majority at the Board that the lay part of the commissioners would possess a preponderating influence. When he called it a lay commission, he spoke of what it would practically be. In the first place, the lay commissioners must have a majority of two. In the next place, if the duties were properly discharged, there could be no doubt that they would be very laborious. He knew, that the general impression would be, that duties affecting the whole general state of the Protestant religion in Ireland were discharged for the sake of the salaries attached to the offices, and with a view to the emoluments to be derived from them. These duties would necessarily be discharged in the absence of the prelates, who would have duties to perform in distant dioceses. He would take the case of the Primate of Ireland, the individual to whom they were to look for the protection of the ecclesiastical interests of the Church against any undue proceedings on the part of the lay commissioners. He was perfectly convinced that, so far as zealous intention was concerned, no man could possibly be better disposed to discharge to the utmost the duties imposed on him than that estimable individual. If he did so, however, he must leave his diocese, and be constantly resident in Dublin. The House would bear in mind that the diocese of Clogher was to be united to that of Armagh. How, then, was it possible he could discharge the additional duties of his diocese, and also those which would be imposed upon him as a member of the Board? If that eminent individual were to reside for a twelvemonth in Dublin, for the purpose of attending to those new duties, some exceedingly zealous gentleman on the other side of the House would be sure to get up in his place, and announce, with a vast deal of pious concern, that the Primate of Ireland had not been residing within his diocese for a whole year. But the noble Lord said, "I have amended this Commission very much—for I have proposed, that when the seal of the Commission is imposed, one Bishop must be present." Why, the imposition of the seal was a mere matter of form. When the Board was to signify its consent to the covenants of an action—when it was about to make a return to Parliament, or to do any formal act, the seal was to be imposed; but the greater part of the transactions of the Board were to be communicated and carried into effect by the secretary and subordinate officers; and therefore the proposition of the noble Lord would be no remedy for the evil, even if it could be conceived that one Bishop, among five lay Commissioners, could control their proceedings. It was for these reasons, that he thought the mode of framing the Commission should be altered. The noble Lord argued, that because the Lord Chancellor possessed great Church patronage at present, there could be no objection, notwithstanding he might possibly be a Presbyterian, to give him a seat at the new Board. He could not agree with the noble Lord, that the evil of the one case was at all comparable to the evil of the other. The Lord Chancellor, in making the distribution of Church patronage, would have to make his selection out of a number of individuals, all well qualified for the discharge of the duty. He could, therefore, only choose among a number of men who had been regularly ordained; and the very fact of whose ordination proved their competency to the discharge of the office; but, in the other case, the Lord Chancellor, being a Presbyterian, would have a much more material influence over the concerns of the Church, because he would have the power of deciding whether a minister should or should not be appointed to a particular church. The Committee would perceive that there was a vast difference between the two cases. What ground, he would ask, could there possibly be for the abolition of the Board of First Fruits? It was composed of laymen and ecclesiastics. He might be told that the Board of First Fruits being connected with the collection of the Vestry-cess had made itself unpopular in Ireland, and that it was consequently better to abolish it. That could not be a sufficient reason, as Vestry-cess would no longer exist. If the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Stanley) had any disposition to make such an alteration in that part of the Bill as should give a proper weight to ecclesiastical authority, he should not object to the partial control of laymen. Of course such a proposition would be cheerfully received by him

(Mr. Goulburn), for he had no other wish connected with the Bill than to insure such an arrangement as should effectually maintain the Church of Ireland for purposes such as he thought that Church alone should be maintained, — namely, those connected with duly and properly providing for the spiritual concerns of the country.

Sir *Robert Bateson* did not wish to take up the time of the Committee in discussing the clause at any length, but he must say, that it formed one of the most objectionable portions of the Bill. Although he had voted against the Second Reading of the Bill, now that it was in Committee, he wished to make it what it professed to be—a Bill that would conduce to the advancement of religion, and the permanence and stability of the united Church of England and Ireland. He objected to the Constitution of the ecclesiastical Commission which, in point of fact, was not an ecclesiastical Commission at all. It had been distinctly shown, that three persons, who had received salaries, would have the control of the whole proceedings. He objected to the constitution of this Commission on the true principles of Reform. He objected to it, because it would be the means of adding patronage and power to the Government, and would be the source of continual jobbing. The appointment of these paid Commissioners would be liable to be given, not to persons who were most competent to discharge the duties of the office, but to the immediate friends and adherents of the minister of the day. These Commissioners would obtain by the Bill such power over the Church to which he belonged as he should be sorry to give to any Lord-lieutenant or Government. If that Commission were wholly composed of the Bishops, it would be much less objectionable. Hon. Gentlemen on a former night had stated, that the Irish bishoprics were complete sinecures, and that, in fact, the Bishops had little or nothing to do. He did not admit that to be the case—but surely those who did could have no objection to provide employment for them; and how could the ecclesiastical affairs of the Church be placed in such proper hands as in those of the Prelates of the Church? He had given notice of an Amendment to the clause, which he should move at the proper time, unless the noble Lord consented to modify it. With regard to some observations made by the noble Lord he would state, that wherever churches had been built in Ireland, it was soon found that they were not large enough to contain the congregations. Where there were no congregations a year ago, the Churches were now crowded, and wherever the clergyman did his duty, the people invariably flocked to them. He looked forward with considerable anxiety and alarm to any clause in that Bill limiting the building of churches in Ireland. The great objection heretofore was, that churches were not built for the people, but a part of the people. If a gentleman subscribed 100*l.* towards building a Church, he expected to have a seat in it—that was not the description of Church, he contended, that was wanted in Ireland. What they wanted there was free churches which would be open for the people. That was one species of reform which he wished to see introduced. With regard to the Vestry-cess, the noble Lord had not explained how that portion of it was to be provided for, which went for the maintenance of parish children, and providing coffins for the poor, and he wished to know whether it was to be provided by the Bill, or presented by the Grand Juries? He objected most strongly to giving persons salaried by Government such monstrous powers over the religion he professed, as the Bill conferred. He viewed with constitutional jealousy such appointments, and if the clause were not struck out of the Bill, or that the four Bishops who had served the preceding year in Parliament were not added to the Board, he should feel it his duty to propose the Amendment, of which he had given notice.

Mr. *Secretary Stanley* observed, it had been argued that the business might be transacted by a Board, similar to the Board of First Fruits in Ireland. Now, he certainly did not approve of the constitution of that Board. It consisted of Archbishops, Bishops, Judges, Law Officers, and "two other proper and discreet persons." Now, he would undertake to say, that more of the business was performed by the two "proper and discreet persons" than by all the others put together. The Board would be, however, in some degree, similar to the Board of First Fruits; but Government, instead of adding "two proper and discreet persons," had extended the number to three. It was said, that this plan was adopted to increase the patronage of the Crown; but the Bill would do away with ten Bishops, which, he thought, had proved that Ministers felt no very inordinate desire for an increase of patronage. He should support the clause as it stood.

Mr. *Shaw* said, there was no part of the Bill to which the Irish clergy generally, and those most interested in the welfare of the Established Church, so much objected, as the tendency of this clause to lower ecclesiastical authority, and to place the spiritual concerns of the Church in the hands of laymen. View the proposed Commission in any light, the preponderance was given to the lay members. In the permanent Commissions, they were in the proportion of two to one in numbers —and in those who were removeable, as the lay Commissioners were to be paid and permanent, they would be at least in the same proportion in influence. Now, he admitted, that there was some weight in the right hon. Gentleman's argument in favour of a few paid Commissioners to do the routine business of the Board; but the right hon. Gentleman did not adduce a single reason against the continuance of all the Bishops in the same authority they had exercised at the Board of First Fruits. No person had ventured to cast an imputation upon the manner in which they performed their important duties as members of that Board. The professed object of the present Bill was to promote the building of churches, the residence of the clergy, and the dissolution of unions; and he would entreat the Committee's attention to this fact, that within the last thirty years, there had been built, under their direction and superintendence, about 480 churches, whereas in the entire preceding century there had been but 134 built. So they had caused 480 glebe houses to be erected, while in the whole of the seventeenth century there had been only 163; and in much the same ratio had unions been dissolved. He could corroborate the statement of his right hon. friend (Mr. Goulburn), that where Churches were built they soon drew congregations to them; and he could instance a case in his own neighbourhood where the late Archbishop of Dublin had first licensed the celebration of service in a school-house, then procured the building of a church, and now there was on that spot a most flourishing congregation. How powerfully, too, did this bear upon that most objectionable provision of the Bill which enabled the Commissioners, principally laymen, to suspend the appointment of a clergyman to a parish where service had been intermitted for three years. Besides the cases he had alluded to, he was aware of one diocese in which there were now twenty parishes with officiating resident clergymen, in no one of which Church service had been performed for much more than three years previous to the appointment of the present ministers by the present Bishop. Above all things he deprecated this transfer to laymen of the just and due authority of the proper heads of the Church, and so powerfully did this sentiment operate upon the minds of many clergymen and laymen of the Established Church in Ireland, that he knew the constitution of the Board as now proposed had induced a willingness on their parts to separate themselves from connexion with the Establishment altogether. He trusted, however, that on this point the Government would give way. He defied the breath of slander to rest on the conduct of the Bishops in the administration of the funds of the First Fruit Board, and if the Government should retain some of the lay Commissioners, he thought they could not reasonably object to the retention of all the Bishops as the ecclesiastical ones. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stanley) objected to the proposal of his hon. friend (Sir Robert Bateson) to have the Bishops who should have attended the previous year in Parliament, because it would take the Bishops for two successive years from their dioceses, but then the improvement the right hon. Gentleman would make was, to have always the same three Bishops and only the three. So that they must by the effect of that arrangement be not only two years, but, by the right hon. Gentleman's own argument, constantly absent from the scenes of their own diocesan duties. He would say no more upon the clause, warmly as he felt upon it, until he heard from the noble Lord what he would concede upon the point to the universally expressed desire of every friend to the Established Church, and he was persuaded he could not reasonably refuse very considerable concessions upon it.

Mr. *Wynn* had no objection to some parts of the Bill, though he had to others. He was of opinion, that two lay Commissioners would be sufficient, and he thought that the Archbishop of Dublin and the Dean of St. Patrick ought, on account of their constant residence in Dublin, to be added to the Commission.

Lord *Althorp* did not object to a majority of the Commissioners being of the clerical character. Neither did he feel any objection to adding the Archbishop of Dublin and another Bishop to the Commission.

Colonel *Perceval* said, he was anxious some time since to make the suggestions which had that night been thrown out by his friends, but the noble Lord, having in some degree given way, he should not now trespass with the time of the Committee further than to state, that he considered the power given to the Lord-lieutenant by the Bill, of removing at his pleasure any member of the Board, was an insult to the hierarchy of Ireland. The Lord-lieutenant had the power of selecting the Bishops who were to have seats at the Board, and he had also an *ad-libitum* power of capriciously removing them. That was a power which he would never consent to place in the hands of any Lord-lieutenant.

Mr. *Ward* was surprised to have heard, in the course of the discussion, that the moment new churches were erected in Ireland, they were filled with congregations. That statement, which was not supported by any documentary evidence, applied, it appeared, only to new churches; for it was generally admitted, that the old churches were very scantily attended.

Mr. *James Grattan* said, this was a very important part of the Bill, as it provided a Commission to superintend the ecclesiastical establishment of Ireland. They had been advised to make use of the Board of First Fruits. To that he could not agree, because that Board had not worked beneficially for Ireland. The hon. member for Montgomeryshire had recommended that the Archbishop of Dublin and the Dean of St. Patrick's should be added to the Commission on account of their constant residence in Dublin; but that very circumstance made against the proposition, because they would, in consequence of their general residence in Dublin, be ignorant of the situation of the remote parts of the country.

Lord *Sandon* recommended, that the Archbishops and Bishops should select delegates to act as Representatives of their own body in the capacity of Commissioners, instead of giving that power to the Government. They would thus escape being mixed up with any appearance of political feeling, which would be likely to excite jealousy in the minds of their brethren.

Colonel *Wood* defended the conduct of the Board of First Fruits. The whole of the First Fruits last year amounted to 40,000*l.*, and that Board had expended 22,000*l.*, or more than that amount, in a most beneficial manner. He thought, that they ought, in this instance, to avail themselves of the assistance of the Board of First Fruits. All the machinery was ready, and might be immediately put in motion.

Lord *Althorp* then moved, "That after the words 'Lord Primate,' the words 'Lord Archbishop of Dublin' be added."

Mr. *Wynn* thought it would be much better if the Commission were placed under the control of the head of the United Church of England and Ireland, than of the Lord-lieutenant.

Sir *Robert Inglis* observed, that when it was stated, that laymen had as much right to interfere with the Church as Churchmen, he protested against the doctrine, as contrary to the principles of an episcopal establishment. But if the noble Lord had said, that the laity ought to bear the burthens connected with the Church, in that proposition he would concur.

Mr. *Estcourt* thought it desirable that Bishops from all parts of Ireland should be members of the Board, and protested against the exclusion from it of any Archbishop or Bishop.

Dr. *Lushington* objected to an extension of the numbers of the Board as likely to retard business, for the due execution of which a certain portion of lay members was necessary.

Mr. *Shaw* explained, and assured the noble Lord, that he had in no way entertained the notion that there could be anything in the nature of a canvassing for votes at the Board. What he contended for was a due weight of opinion and sound rational influence of the heads of the Church in matters essentially ecclesiastical, but as the noble Lord had conceded two additional Bishops in the composition of the Board, and the Committee appeared disinclined to go further, he must yield his own opinion, strong as it still continued, on the point, and he would not put the Committee to the trouble of a division.

The Amendment agreed to, and the clause ordered to stand part of the Bill. Clauses to the 14th agreed to.

APPENDIX TO VOLUME XVII

The following Speech of the Right Hon. C. Poulett Thomson on the State of the Country as affected by the Monetary System has been corrected by authority, and is to be substituted for that in p. 444 of this Volume.

Mr. *Poulett Thomson* could assure the House, that it was with great pleasure he had given way to the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Foster), whose speech could not have failed to produce a great effect upon the House, coming, as it did, from one practically engaged in the banking and commercial affairs of this country. He was not surprised that the hon. member for Knaresborough should complain of the manner in which the Motion of the hon. member for Whitehaven had been met; for he seemed, by some happy turn of mind, to imagine, that he could engraft on a Motion, introduced distinctly and avowedly for one purpose, another purpose completely and entirely different; and that he would have an opportunity, by voting for the Committee of the hon. Gentleman, of making that Committee subservient to promote his own plan. Such, however, could not be the case. After the Amendment of his noble friend, it was impossible that the House could consider that any other question was before it than whether it should affirm or negative a departure from the standard of value as established by law. That was the question which was now before them, and that was the question on which the country was now looking for the decision of the House. The people anticipated that an end would be put to the agitation of the question—an agitation which, even then, was paralysing in some degree, the trade of the country, and which, if allowed to continue, would be likely to be attended with yet more disastrous consequences. The simple question before the House was—shall there be depreciation or no depreciation? The hon. Member, in introducing his Motion, had entered into a long discussion respecting the distress which he alleged existed in the country, and no doubt the hon. Member acted wisely in so doing for the purpose which he had in view, because, by taking that course, he might find support, perhaps, from some few who, differing from him as to the remedy, would wish to go into a Committee with a view of inquiring into the causes of the distress. He was prepared to maintain, that although there might, and unfortunately did, prevail among certain classes a considerable degree of distress, yet the condition of the country at large was very far from what the hon. Member had described it to be. In spite of the hon. Gentleman's sneer at official documents, he should venture to advert to some to which his position in the Government had given him access, and which he thought the House would consider neither delusive nor valueless. Unless the House was willing to take some of the general facts upon which the hon. Member relied in detail—unless it was willing, in some degree, to take the amount of relief afforded to the poor as a guide to show their increase or diminution—unless it was willing to look to the consumption of the country and the statements of intelligent individuals—he knew not what could be had recourse to as indices of the public welfare. He wished to touch lightly on the subject of the distress; but at the same time he did not consider it consistent with the honest and upright conduct he should always desire to pursue, if, entertaining, as he did, views different from those of the hon. Gentleman, he did not state his opinions respecting that distress, notwithstanding the unpopularity which might attach to the avowal of them. He did not mean to deny that distress always existed, and always must, to a certain extent, in the country; but that was not the position of the hon. member for Whitehaven (Mr. M. Attwood). He had stated that the distress at present was unparalleled—that every branch of industry was going to decay—that the landholders were all but ruined—that the farmers were in a state of bankruptcy—that the merchants were ready to close their concerns—that manufacturing capital yielded in the shape of profits little or nothing. From these positions of the hon. Gentleman he entirely dissented; and he believed the condition of the several interests of the country to be in a very different state from that which the hon. Member had represented them to be in. To show that the statements which had been made to the House were greatly exaggerated, he (Mr. Poulett Thomson) would prove what the condition of the poor had been during the ten years ending in 1821, as compared with the ten years ending in 1831, by reckoning the sums devoted to the relief of the poor during these periods. In the earlier period 68,000,000*l.* had been given for the relief of the poor, being an average of 6,800,000*l.* a-year; while in the ten years ending in 1831, only 62,900,000*l.* were devoted to the same object; being an average of 6,290,000*l.*; consequently, upon the last period of ten years there had been a reduction of nearly 6,000,000*l.*, although the population had increased sixteen per cent within that period. There had been a reduction on the charge in proportion to the population since that time of not less than twenty-six per cent, the charge having been at the rate of 13*s.* 1*d.* per head in 1811, and 9*s.* 9*d.* in 1831. The following tables (which the right hon. Member read) would show the House the particulars of his statement:—

Sums expended for the Relief of the Poor.

Average of 3 yrs., 1748, 49, & 50 .	£689,971
1786	1,556,803
Average of 3 yrs., 1783, 84, & 85 .	2,004,237
1803	4,267,963
1812-13 . . .	6,981,212
1813-14 . .	6,627,550
1814-15 . . .	5,743,509
1815-16 . .	5,724,506
1816-17 . . .	6,918,217
1817-18 . .	7,890,148
1818-19 . . .	7,531,650
1819-20 . .	7,329,594
1820-21 . . .	6,958,445
1821-22 . .	6,358,703
In 10 years to 25th March 1822	68,063,534
1822-23 . . .	5,772,958
1823-24 . .	5,734,216
1824-25 . . .	5,786,991
1825-26 . .	5,928,502
1826-27 . . .	6,441,088
1827-28 . .	6,298,003
1828-29 . . .	6,332,410
1829-30 . . .	6,829,042
1830-31 . . .	6,798,888
1831-32 . . .	7,036,968
In 10 years, to 25th March, 1832	62,959,066

Years.	Population of the United Kingdom.	Amount raised in Taxes.	Expended for the relief of Poor.	Proportion of Taxes to Population of United Kingdom.			Proportion of Poor Rate to Population of England and Wales.		
		£.	£.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
1801	16,338,102	34,115,146	4,017,871	2	1	9	0	9	1
1811	18,347,720	65,173,545	6,656,106	3	10	3	0	13	1
1821	21,193,458	55,834,192	6,358,703	2	12	8	0	10	7
1831	24,271,763	46,424,440	6,798,888	1	18	3	0	9	9

In order, however, to show the real state of the case still more clearly, he had endeavoured to obtain information from some of the principal towns, and he had selected four manufacturing places of great consequence, (Glasgow, Manchester, Sheffield, and Birmingham). He considered that these four towns afforded a fair sample of the town population of Great Britain; and if there were any material distress in the country, it could not fail to pervade those industrious communities. He would begin with Glasgow, and first call the attention of the House to a statement as to the poor. The right hon. Member read the following paper:—

Glasgow.—Poor Rates.—The assessment for the maintenance of paupers in the ten parishes of the Royalty, exclusive of the suburbs, was—

In 1800 - - - -	4,534
1810 - - - -	5,770
1820 - - - -	13,136
1830 - - - -	7,866

'In the town and suburbs the population in 1830 was 202,426; the number of paupers 5,006; and the total sum expended on their relief, 17,281*l.*'

The House must remember, that the population of Glasgow in 1831 was nearly double what it was in 1810; so that, with double the population, there was a diminution of the Poor-rate by nearly one-half. He would next read to them an extract of a letter from the Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce at Glasgow, a man on whose authority the House might place the utmost reliance:—

'I have reason to believe that during 'the year which has just expired, the 'hand-weaving branch has been enjoying 'a profitable trade, and the prospects for 'the coming year are so favourable, that 'the more prudent manufacturers entertain 'fears that a little further prosperity may 'occasion a revival of the spirit of over-'trading. The calico-printing business is 'understood to have been extremely pros-'perous from the moment of the repeal of 'the tax on that article, and its prosperity 'still continues. The silk manufacture, 'too, is considered to have been doing 'well. The hands generally belonging to 'the different branches of industry are in 'full employment, and, with the exception 'of the hand-loom weavers, at good 'wages.'

He would next go to Sheffield, the particulars of which were equally striking, as appeared by the following statement:—

'Population of the township of Sheffield '—1811, 31,314; 1821, 35,840; 1831, '59,011.

'Poor-rates of the township of sheffield '—1818, 31,189*l.*; 1820, 37,467*l*; '1830, 18,691*l.*; 1832, 17,342*l.*'

Thus there appeared to be a diminution of the Poor-rate by one-half since 1820, during these ten years, which had been spoken of as years of misery and distress, in a town with a population increased from 35,000 to 60,000. From the statements of the Master Cutler, it appeared, that the artizans in that town were receiving, in general, good wages. He next came to the town which he had the honour to represent (Manchester). He knew, that if he looked only to the increase of his popularity, the argument which he now brought forward with regard to the distress complained of was not the right way to attain that object. But he never meant to deny, that distress did exist there; he only contended against the exaggerations which prevailed upon the subject; and he would do so in the face of his constituents as well as of that House, because he thought it ar better that the truth, and the truth alone, should be stated, than that any delusions should be suffered to prevail through the means of statements that required only to be touched to fall to pieces. How could it be possible, according to the statement of the hon. member for Whitehaven, that four-fifths of the working population of that town were in the parish books, when the Poor-rate was only four shillings in the pound. He had not the slightest hesitation in giving a direct contradiction to the statement of the hon. member for Whitehaven, and that contradiction was confirmed by the following facts respecting the great county of Lancashire, which included, not only Manchester, but Liverpool, and many other large towns. The aggregate Poor-rate in Lancashire was, in 1817, 336,000*l.*; 1818, 372,000.; 1831, 290,000*l.* Thus, there was a diminution of thirty per cent in the Poor-rate, although the population had increased by 300,000 souls. He held in his hand a communication from Manchester, in which it was stated that since 1813 there had been a progressive and very material improvement in the condition of the people: that in consequence of the new inventions and increased speed of machinery, one-fourth fewer hands were required to produce a given quantity of yarn than twenty years ago (and the reduction had been chiefly in the labour of children); the people were better fed and clothed, and their employment was never more regular and constant. He would then proceed to the town last upon his list, which had been referred to on a former occasion by the hon. Member opposite, who represented it; and which he had represented in such an extraordinary state of distress, that had he not before his eyes the evidence of the parliamentary writ by which the hon. Member was returned, he should almost doubt whether the hon. Gentleman had ever set his foot within the place. He had been forestalled in his intended statements of the decrease of pauperism in Birmingham by the hon. member for Walsall (Mr. Foster), and the House could not have failed to observe how completely his statement negatived the exaggerated accounts of the distress of Birmingham. The fact, that the number of paupers had decreased as compared with the population, from eighteen per cent in 1811, and twenty-four per cent in 1817, to sixteen per cent in 1832, was one of great importance. The hon. Member might doubt his statement, and he would therefore read the particulars of the progress of Pauperism in Birmingham obtained from the authorities of the town.

	Population.	Average No. of Paupers.	
1801 to 1810	64,848	10,117	15 per cent.
1811 to 1820	76,689	13,800	18
1821 to 1830	95,868	12,606	13½
1830 to 1833	110,364	16,612	15
In 1817	78,870	19,278	24
1832	113,106	18,516	16

But he would go further, and produce to the House indubitable evidence of the increased prosperity of the town. The hon. member for Birmingham said, in his evidence before a Committee, that capital was extinct in Birmingham, and that although numbers of the people were enjoying luxuries and spending money in amusements, they were growing poor. He should be glad to arrive at the conclusion, that, in spite of growing poorer, men were able to enjoy more of the pleasures of life; but not being able to do so, he was fain to believe that they enjoyed more of the pleasures of life, because they were better able to afford them. One of the best proofs of the prosperity of Birmingham was afforded by the two great canals; and he would read to the House an account of the revenues derived from them during several years:—

	Tolls on the Old Birmingham Canal.	Tolls on the Worcester and Birmingham Canal.
1826	£88,394	£20,255
1827	96,332	24,912
1828	101,932	27,895
1829	102,485	28,052
1830	106,125	31,291
1831	107,033	33,246
1832	105,855	33,700

That was tolerably good evidence, that trade was not on the decline in Birmingham, that the town was not going to decay, and that capital was not annihilated, as was represented by the hon. Member for that town.

The Tolls on the Market formed another criterion of the state of the town which was equally satisfactory. They amounted, in 1826-27, to 1,025*l.*; 1827-28, 1,078*l.*; 1828-29, 2,383*l.*; 1829-30, 2,925*l.*; 1830-31, 3,077*l.*; 1831-32, 3,096*l.* Provisions had also fallen in price since 1826:—At the rate of—Meat 23, Bread 7½, Bacon 31, Cheese 40—per cent. He would not pretend to say, that his informants were more correct than the hon. Member, but they had the advantage of stating figures, and they had access to all the documents of the town. It was for the House to judge whether the vague statements of the hon. Gentleman, or the documents furnished by the Magistrates, were most deserving of confidence. He had another document to which he would call their attention, and leave them to judge of its value. It was an extract of a letter from the senior Magistrate of Birmingham, dated March, 1833, and that Gentleman had the reputation of being every way qualified to give a correct opinion on the subject. He wrote—'From 'an experience of more than fifty years, 'I can safely aver, that I never saw the 'artizans of this place better fed, clothed, 'or more comfortably housed, than at pre'sent. As respects the town itself, 'there are manifest symptoms of im'provement. From adequate authority, 'I may say, that the property of the place, 'and within four miles of it, has in'creased in value twenty-five per cent 'within the last fifteen years. More build'ing is now going on than has been known 'for many years. The increase of pa'rochial expenditure is trifling compared 'with the greatly augmented population. 'Contrary to all former precedents, nearly 'all transactions in business are on money 'terms. The Birmingham canal—that 'great duct for the conveyance of our raw 'materials, and heavy articles—has a larger 'tonnage than ever was known, and all 'the public institutions are well supported.' He had thought it right to dwell on these facts, because the hon. Member grounded his Motion on the assertion, that the distress of the country was great and unparalleled. After the facts which he had stated, he did not believe that the House would adopt the hon. Member's conclusion. He was however prepared to go further, and, in spite of the observations of the hon. member for Oldham, who asserted, that an increase of consumption was only an evidence of increase of distress, he would refer to the increase of consumption in the United Kingdom of the four great articles, all entering largely into the consumption of the poorer classes—tobacco, sugar, tea, and coffee—as evidence of the not decaying prosperity of the kingdom. For this purpose he would proceed to mention the particulars in the following Table of the

CONSUMPTION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

	1814.	1832.	INCREASE.
Tobacco . .	15,373,221 lbs.	20,233,468	31 per cent.
Sugar	2,324,051 cwt.	3,655,535	57 —
Tea	22,611,000 lbs.	31,548,407	39 —
Coffee . . .	5,775,000 lbs.	22,952,527	297 —

Thus, whilst the increase of the population had been only about twenty-four or twenty-five per cent., there had been an increase in the consumption of all these articles far beyond that proportion. He went back, it would be observed, to the year 1814, because that year had been selected by the hon. member for Whitehaven as the halcyon period of unlimited paper issues, and unbounded prosperity. Let the hon. member for Oldham say what he pleased, he was sure the House, after hearing such a statement would be convinced that the mass of the people enjoyed a greater command over the comforts of life than formerly. The rich man, it would be remembered, added little or nothing to his consumption of the necessaries of life, however much the price might fall, and therefore he was justified in assuming, that the increased consumption he had pointed out had taken place exclusively among the lower and middle classes, and was a sure proof that they had increased in comfort and opulence. He would next refer to the consumption of cotton and sheep's wool, constituting the great staple manufactures of the country. He had separated these from the other articles, because a large portion of them were exported; but the increase, as a large part was consumed at home, might be taken both as a proof of additional enjoyment and additional employment for the labouring classes. The consumption of these articles, then, was:—

	1820.	1832.	INCREASE.
Cotton Wool . . .	152,829,633	259,412,463	70 per cent.
Sheep's Wool . .	9,775,605	27,666,350	183 —

Increase of Population in the same period 16 per cent.

Perhaps he had better not speak of silk, as there had been several alterations in the duty. Another point which he considered not less deserving of notice was the great diminution of the rate of mortality which had taken place in the country during the last fifty years, as it showed an increase of comfort. In 1780, one in forty died annually; at present the proportion was not more than one in fifty-eight, being a diminution of thirty-six per cent. Was not that also an evidence that the condition of the people had improved? In adducing these returns he was replying to that part of the hon. Gentleman's speech in which he stated that the power of consumption of the people had only increased eleven per cent, while the population had increased thirty per cent. The documents he had quoted showed the case to be very different. He regretted as much as any man that there should be distress in the country, and the rather as he feared it was a condition of affairs for which patience was the only remedy; he should be the first likewise to advocate the principle that it was the bounden duty of Parliament to seek a remedy for distress, and, whenever inquiry appeared likely to point out a remedy, it ought to be instituted. To any inquiry which seemed to hold out a promise of utility he would readily assent; but the present proposition he considered would prove disastrous in its consequences. He was not deaf to the cry of distress—he wished to diminish and relieve it to the utmost extent possible, but he looked upon the proposition now before the House to be one made solely with a view to depreciate the standard, and therefore calculated not to inquire into distress, and still less to afford a remedy for it. On the contrary, he thought that he should be able to show, that by granting the Committee asked for by the hon. Member, and granting the depreciation which might be the consequence of it, the House would inflict upon the mass of the community (the labouring classes especially) an amount of misery and wretchedness such as never was before inflicted upon any country. All history demonstrated, however beneficial a depreciation of the currency might be to the debtor, who wished to acquit himself of his obligations at a reduced standard of value—however beneficial for a time to the tradesman who held a stock of goods, it must be, as it ever had been, the most severe infliction possible for the labouring classes. He wished that this question should be well understood by the country; not but that he agreed with the hon. Gentleman behind him (Mr. Foster), that there was far from being that feeling upon the subject amongst the industrious classes which had been described by the hon. Member. He had continued intercourse with people of various classes, and from his experience he must say, that although among certain currency doctors there might be a cry with respect to this question, and there might have been attempts made to enlist the people on their side, yet those attempts had all failed, and the people were indifferent, if not averse, to the change contemplated by the hon.

Member. In order to render them decidedly hostile to it, it was only necessary to inform them upon the true state of the question. For this purpose, he would find it necessary to refer the House to four distinct periods which marked, in the strongest and clearest way, the real effects of a depreciation, whether forced or natural, of the standard of value, and on the other hand exhibited in the most striking manner the beneficial consequences of a steady and uniform value of money. For the first of these instances he should have to go back, very shortly, to rather an early period in the history of this country, that in which the first considerable depreciation took place in the value of gold and silver, in consequence of the opening of the South American mines. Between 1527, and about 1540, the pound sterling was depreciated nearly one-third. All the writers of the time describe the miserable condition to which the poor of England were reduced. Before the passing of the 43rd of Elizabeth, they were represented as wandering about begging or committing the most horrible crimes in open day. It indeed had been disputed, whether the distress thus described was not owing to the abolition of the monasteries in the reign of Henry 8th; but when a similar state of distress existed in other states of Europe where no monasteries were abolished, and no Poor-laws established, it was right to infer that those writers who attributed the distress to the depreciation in the value of money formed a correct opinion, and the correctness of that view was now universally acknowledged. He would quote only one sentence to the House upon this subject, from the writings of Mr. John Smith who, in speaking of the distress of 1550, said—'The principal 'real grievance at this time of the poorer 'manufacturers, they do not appear to 'have been sensible of, and historians 'have since overlooked it, was the state of 'the coin. The debasement of the coin, 'which was now of several years standing, 'had undoubtedly given a nominal advance to all things vendible; and though 'perhaps to wages too, yet probably 'nothing near in proportion to the difference of the coin. And as the money in 'which they were paid, not containing as 'much silver as it did before, would not 'purchase the same quantity of necessaries of life it was wont to do—that, in 'course, must have bore hard upon the 'lower sort of people especially, who had 'everything to buy, and nothing to sell, 'except their labour.' Were Mr. Smith writing with all the experience of the present day, he could not more accurately describe the effects of depreciation which had taken place in our times; or what would be the effects of the depreciation now proposed by the hon. Member. In 1550, in consequence of this depreciation in the value of money, and the miserable condition of the people, a maximum price was actually placed on all the commodities sold in this country, which many writers ascribe to the proper cause, The second period to which he begged to call the attention of the House, was that from 1660 to 1760, during which, with one exception, the value of money remained nearly equal; and there had been no period, with that one exception, of greater prosperity to the labouring classes. He would state the evidence upon which he came to that conclusion. In the year 1680, the Poor-rates were computed by Davenant at 665,000*l.*, for England and Wales; in 1750, nearly a hundred years afterwards, they amounted only to 689,000*l.*, having increased only 24,000*l.* in the long period of a century, during which the precious metals retained nearly the same value. There was, however, one exception; that was about the year 1695, when the coin of the country was debased. If Gentlemen would turn to the history of that day, they would see to what a state of misery and distress the labouring classes were reduced. Mr. Lowndes said, in his Report to the Treasury, in 1695, that the degraded state of the coinage was "one great cause of the raising the price, not only of all merchandises, but of every article necessary for the maintenance of the common people, to their great grievance." Mr. Locke, in his answer to Mr. Lowndes, confirmed this statement, and said, that "the money-price of all sorts of provisions had risen excessively." Let the House see the effect of this upon the Poor-rates. In the year 1700 they had risen, according to Sir F. Morton Eden's calculation, to 1,000,000*l.* Afterwards, when the currency had been restored, and had again become settled, they fell, in 1750, to 680,000*l.* That proved, he thought, that the only interruption to prosperity which occurred in the course of a century, originated in the debasement of the coinage, and lasted till wages had righted themselves by being raised in proportion. The third period to which he wished to draw the attention of the House—that from 1770 to 1816, was one of considerable depreciation. The evidence for this period was much less easily disputed than that to which he had hitherto adverted. Mr. Arthur Young took great pains upon the subject, and spent three years as Secretary of the Agricultural Society, in carrying on an inquiry into the state of the poor, the amount of their wages, and the prices of their provisions; and he stated, that the mean price of agricultural labour in England and Wales, during the three years ending 1770, was about 7*s.* 6*d.* per week, or 1*s.* 3*d.* per day; that the mean price of agricultural labour in 1810 and 1811, when the depreciation was at its acmé, was 14*s.* 6*d.* per week, or 2*s.* 5*d.* per day, being a rise of nearly 100 per cent on the former period; but in the mean time beef had risen from about 1*l.* 7*s.* to 3*l.* 10*s.* per cwt., or nearly 300 per cent.; bread had more than doubled; butter had risen from 6½*d.* to 1*s.* 2½*d.* per lb., being a rise of about 120 per cent.; cheese had risen from 3¼*d.* to 8¼*d.*, being more than 200 per cent; oatmeal had risen from 4*s.* 9*d.* to 11*s.* 6*d.*; salt had risen 400 per cent; malt 140 per cent; and other articles in proportion. It appeared, therefore, that whilst wages rose only 100 per cent, some of the most essential articles of provision rose 120, 200, and even 400 per cent. Hence, said Mr. Young, the extreme distress of the labouring classes—a distress which, at the end of the war, was evinced by the great increase of the Poor-rates, to which he was always willing to refer as a test. In 1783, 1784, and 1785, the Poor-rates, according to the Returns, averaged 2,004,000*l.*; and, in 1815, they amounted to 5,724,000*l.*, being an increase of more than 150 per cent. In the fourth period during which the standard of value had been raised in the manner so much objected to by the hon. member for Whitehaven—he found the greatest difficulty in dealing with the subject, and in bringing undoubted facts to bear upon it; but there were documents which would, he thought, be sufficient to decide the point. The Tables kept at Greenwich-hospital, containing the prices of provisions, and the wages of labour, and the extremely able statistical tables kept at Glasgow, by Dr. Cleland, whose accuracy and research it was impossible to praise too highly, would throw light on the subject. What were the real wages of artisans in 1814, 1815, and 1816, so much lauded by the hon. Gentleman? And what were they at present? Whilst the prices of commodities had fallen very materially, owing to the rise in the value of the currency, the wages of labour had not fallen in the same proportion. From Dr. Cleland's tables he would quote this statement:—

Rate of Wages	Mechanics.	Weavers.
	s. d. *s. d.*	*s. d.* *s. d.*
1819	2 6 to 3 9	0 8¼ to 1 2½
1831	do. do.	0 11 to 1 4

Thus the rise in the money wages of weavers, since 1819, had been fifteen to twenty per cent, and that of mechanics stationary. The prices of provisions during the same periods stood thus:—

	Oatmeal.	Bread per qr loaf.	Cheese.	Candles.	Soft Sugar.
	s. d.	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*
1819	1 3	0 11¾	0 8½	1 0	0 7
1831	1 2	0 8½	0 6	0 7	0 5½
Fall since 1819:—	7 per cent.	25 p. cent.	29 p. cent.	41 p. cent.	21 p. cent.

Thus showing a great advance in the real wages received. The Greenwich-hospital tables, to which he appealed with confidence, because they were official, and regularly kept, showed the same results. He had taken three periods from these tables, and had placed against them the amount of wages paid to bricklayers, and the price of meat and flour. The account stood thus:—

	Wages of Bricklayers.	Flesh per cwt.	Flour.
	s. d.	*s. d.*	*s. d.*
1790	2 4	36 10	43 4
1812	5 5	78 0	107 5
1830	4 10	43 6	46 0

It thus appeared, that between 1790 and 1812, there was a rise in wages of 132 per cent.; and upon flesh and flour, of 110 and 150 per cent. Between 1812 and 1830 there had been a fall of only ten per cent in wages; whilst the difference in the price of flesh and flour was seventy-seven per cent and 133 per cent; and everything else in proportion. These facts deserved the consideration of those who were to pass judgment upon the question before the House, because they showed indisputably that depreciation, however brought about, must be injurious to the operative classes. Wages never rose in proportion, or, at least, only after a very long period, to the rise in the value of commodities; and it was impossible to impress too strongly upon the attention of the House or of the country this fact—that the labouring classes would not profit by any attempt to depreciate the currency. The more the history of the different periods to which he had alluded was studied, the more evident would that conclusion, he felt satisfied, appear. What had been characterized by the hon. member for Whitehaven as a "system of confiscation and public robbery," had certainly then not been one of confiscation to the great mass of operators. He did not indeed admit the justice of those words, as applied to the Act of 1819; but if the hon. Member thought proper so to apply them, he must admit them as applicable to what must be the result of his proposition, with this difference, that if the system of confiscation and public robbery now proposed were adopted, it would tend most materially to injure the operative classes; so that, whilst they participated in the shame of the Act, they would not only be excluded from any of its supposed benefits, but reap from it inevitable misery. But if the hon. Member's proposition would not benefit the labouring classes, whom would it benefit? The hon. Member said, that the country prospered under the former system, but he only showed that a factitious paper money for a time increased the industry of the country. He entirely failed in showing any connexion between the simple fact of returning to the metallic standard, and the distress of the present time. No over-issue of paper could take place, with whatever apparent prosperity it might be attended, without there necessarily being a reaction productive of misery; and in proportion as over-issues took place—in proportion as the stream had been unduly supplied—would the returning rush of the waters be great, and barrenness and dearth be spread over the land. He had heard it said, indeed by some, "We do not wish to produce depreciation by any violent or sudden measure; we mean to obtain an over-issue of paper, which will create great temporary prosperity, to be followed by contraction of the currency, by distress, by applications for gold, by the inability of the Bank to meet those applications; and thus arrive at an inconvertible paper currency, which once again obtained, you will never more return to cash payments." That was a doctrine which he had heard propounded, although he did not believe its advocates would be found openly to avow themselves in that House. But, in case they should, he rejoiced that this Motion had been submitted to the House—he rejoiced that this question of a straightforward, downright act of spoliation and bankruptcy had been offered for decision, because it would, he trusted, entirely prevent any attempt at arriving at the same result by a sidewind which would lengthen present suffering, and increase the ultimate distress. But he must return to his former question. Whom did the hon. Gentleman propose to benefit by the depreciation? He had shown that it could not benefit the labouring class. The hon. Gentleman said, that the landed interest was suffering. He admitted it; but would the landed interest be relieved by a measure of this kind, except in so far as it would be relieved in a manner which he respected the gentlemen of England too much to suppose they would accept—namely, by paying off their fixed engagements in a depreciated currency. Would their rents be better paid in that currency than in any other? No such thing. Supposing their rents were raised in this way, all other things would be raised in proportion, and then could they purchase more of the enjoyments of life than they could command at present? They could not. They could receive relief in no way but that which he believed every man of honour would spurn. Then as to the manufacturers and shopkeepers, how would it benefit them? It would benefit them to the extent of their stock on hand, and no more. That might be to the extent of five, or ten, or twenty per cent, or whatever might be the amount of the depreciation. That would be the work of a single day. When the next day he came to purchase, he would find that his condition would not be improved. Then was there any other party who could derive a benefit from it? He might be told the debtor would. But why should the debtor be more an object of sympathy than the creditor? Putting aside all considerations of honesty, he saw no claim the debtor had to the consideration of the State. The creditor, it was generally who had amassed capital, and who had contributed to the increase of the national wealth, while the debtor might have contracted engagements he could not fulfil, and who had dissipated gains he had not honestly acquired. So much for the immediate consequences of a measure for depreciating the standard, but there were remote evils to be considered not less important. For his own part, he asked for equal justice for each party, for both debtor and creditor; but looking to the general policy of such a measure as that before the House, he would ask what, if it were carried into effect, would become of the desire of accumulating? and who would wish to have property, when the simple *fiat* of the Legislature might destroy, in a few hours, the result of fifty years' persevering toil, and the hopes of parents and children? And upon what grounds too? Simply, that the poor debtor was distressed, whilst your rich creditor was enjoying all the sweets of opulence. There was much capital in the country, which must always remain in it, and which could not be applied except where it stood; but there was much also that might be transferred: let the experiment now proposed be once tried, and away would go a large mass of the capital which had tended so much to invigorate the industry and add to the resources of the country. This was, in his opinion, the fair view of the question, and that was, he repeated it, one of depreciation or no depreciation. The Committee which the hon. Member called for once granted, that must follow (he would not say that it must necessarily follow as the result of that Committee's acts), but in the minds of the public it must follow; and the effect must be worse, from the fact of the hon. Member leaving the extent of the depreciation undefined. If he had said that it would be five, or ten, or fifteen per cent, men would be prepared for the result; but leaving it indefinite, he left them nothing to guide them. Every creditor in London would know it to-morrow, and what would be the consequence? An hon. Member had stated some time ago, that such was the distress of the country, that every second or third house from Charing-cross to the Exchange contained an insolvent. Suppose that to be the fact, what would the creditors say when they found a proposition of this sort entertained and agreed to by the House? The creditor would go to his debtor and say, "Pay me at once, or I shall sell all you possess; and, though it may be at a sacrifice, that must be better than the indefinite loss which I may sustain by waiting to obtain payment in a depreciated currency. I shall realize what I can, and transfer it to a country where the principle of depreciation may not be so much in fashion." What would be the situation of the bank, if this Committee were appointed? Was there a man who had a bank-note, who would not at once endeavour to turn it into cash, that he might, as much as possible, guard against the impending depreciation? The sheets would be scarcely dry by the means of which the proceedings of that House were circulated throughout the country, before, if the hon. Member's proposal was adopted, there would ensue a scene of universal bankruptcy and confusion never witnessed in any country. And for whose benefit was this to happen? Not for the benefit of landed proprietors; not for that of manufacturers and merchants, since their benefit would be only for a day; not for the good of the labouring and operative classes, since they would be deeply injured by it; not for the benefit of the fundholders, since they would be actually pillaged by it! For whose benefit was it then? Solely for that of debtors. By it Mr. A, the debtor, would have so much the more, and Mr. B, the creditor, so much the less. On one hint that had been thrown out in the course of the evening, he would say a single word. It had been said, that, by this depreciation, the public burthens would be diminished; he admitted the assertion, but, at the same time, he would say, that there were other ways, and happily honest and honourable ways, to diminish those burthens, without disturbing public contracts. Would not a reduction of taxation be a more direct and a more honest mode of relieving those burthens? And had nothing been recently done in that way? Upwards of 6,000,000*l.* had been reduced within the last four years, and relief had thus been afforded to the people in a more upright and equitable manner than in the way suggested by the present Motion, because the public creditor had not been deprived of that to which he was fairly entitled. The hon. member for Birmingham, indeed, contended that reduction of taxation gave no relief, which was a remarkable doctrine to be entertained by gentlemen who proposed to depreciate the currency as a means of lightening the public burthens. The hon. Gentleman, the member for Oldham, had given utterance to the oft-repeated fallacy, that the creditor had gained enormously by the appreciation of money. He very much doubted the correctness of this assertion. Mr. Mushet had shown, as clearly as could be done by figures, that the public creditor, instead of gaining by the appreciation of money, was, taking into consideration the loss he suffered during the depreciation, a loser to the extent of somewhere about 44,000*l.* a-year perpetual annuity. He objected, then, to the propositions of the hon. Member even on this ground. If they could no longer bear the public burthens, or pay that which was due to the public creditor, he should say, "compound with him; exhibit the state of your affairs; say that you are not able to pay the 28,000,000*l.* which he at present receives; but do not adopt that which was only a clumsy means of arriving at the same end—which carried with it a complete disruption of all other money contracts, and rendered insecure private and public credit—which would reduce to beggary not only a few rich fundholders, as they were termed, but no less than 275,000 public creditors, who received dividends under 400*l.*, and which would take the means of livelihood from the widow and the orphan. He had now concluded what he wished to address to the House. He would offer to the proposal of the hon. Member his determined opposition. He would do so, because it was founded on injustice, and would be followed by ruin. As a proposal for a Committee to inquire into distress, it would be useless, if it were not dangerous. As a proposal to lower the standard of value which it really was, it was at once fraught with dishonour and prospective ruin. In it he saw the complete disarrangement of the whole commercial and social system of this country. In it he saw the loss of that high reputation which this country possessed amongst the nations of Europe, as such he earnestly implored the House to reject it. Let them avoid it, not only because it would inflict on the country all the misery he had pointed out; but let them do so because it would, he in his conscience believed, cause them to forfeit that which ought to be as dear to a nation as to an individual, an hitherto unspotted name for honour and integrity.

Debate Adjourned.

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TO

VOLS. XV. XVI. & XVII. *(THIRD SERIES)* SESSION 1833,

OF

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FINIS.

T. C. Hansard, Printer,
32, Paternoster-row, London.